

# Smiling through a Monday

## Malluchan

In-Progress

Metal Fight Beyblade/???????? ???? ??



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# Summary

Just a few one-shots to get you through a weekday! New chapter posted every weekday morning; just smile, it's good for your face. IMPORTANT CONTEST INFO INSIDE! On hiatus.

# **Geek is taken to a whole new level**

**Far away, in some strange land, wherever Ryuga went during the time he was traveling, we notice a slight disturbance in the random wildlife.**

"I AM YOUR FATHER!"

Kenta peered around the tree, wondering who could be scaring the birds down from the trees. Most of them dead.

"LUKE, I AM YOUR FATHER!"

Ryuga, wielding a cobalt-colored lightsaber, stabbed at unseen opponents, his cape/jacket billowing in the wind.

"I SAID I AMMMM YOUR FATHER! NOW FIGHT ME!"

He struck a tree with heartfelt vengeance.

"I AMMM YOUR-ah, forget it." The lightsaber disappeared and Kenta decided to label it in his mind as "Regular Life."

**Over in Dungeon Gym, somewhere in America, we wonder what could be making all that racket.**

"Mfgmshabdo, Solo!" Toby practices his Greedo impression in private. But not completely alone.

Masamune and Zeo are laughing in the basement, watching the secret video screens, as the Team Dungeon leader creeps up behind Toby and grabs him by the shoulders.

Toby screams, and yells to high sky. His scream breaks the mirror in front of him.

"YOU'RE DEAD!" Hopefully that gym leader will save his own skin somehow.

**Up on top of some peaceful mountain, supposedly alone in a rotting temple, the lovely atmosphere is interrupted by some inferior sci-fi nerd.**

"IT IS YOUR FATE. JOIN ME LUKE, AND WE SHALL RULE TOGETHER."

"FATHER! NOOOOOO!"

He turned with a gasp, quickly followed by an urge to wring Gingka's neck as they raced down the mountainside.

**Over in Metal City, we observe a regular lunchtime with the eccentric president of the WBBA, in an attempt to lighten the day; but his geekhood is evidently lost on Hikaru.**

Hikaru paused in front of Ryo's desk. She knew he was busy; she should probably bring him lunch from the cafeteria downstairs.

"What do you want for lunch, sir?"

He paused for a moment to think; and then, "BRING ME SOLO AND THE WOOKIE."

"I'm sorry, what?"

"Uh, it was a quote."

"From...what?"

"Star wars."

"Oh. So what do you want?"

"BRING ME CHICKEN AND A COOKIE."

"Okay. That's better."

# When cavities rear their ugly heads

Tobio crouched on the edge of the balcony, peering over the rim at a hapless blader. Or a target, as far as he was concerned.

His target ran away like a scared goat at the sound of his idiot phone ringing.

Annoyed, he sat up and pulled out the big clunky phone that didn't even have texting on it. Caller ID showed that it was his friend Maya.

"Hello", he snarled into the phone.

"Oh, hey, Tobio. Whatcha doin'?"

"Why did you have to interrupt my target practice?", he whined into the phone.

"Cuz I haven't talked to you in forever, duh."

"But I was busy."

"Oh, why didn't I just read the words in your mind", quipped Maya.

"Don't quote that creepy crab."

"Why?"

"Let me repeat that: CREEPY CRAB."

"Ok, I getcha now." On the other end, he could hear Maya sigh and sit down with a newspaper. He checked his watch. 8 am exactly; predictable, reliable Maya.

Tobio unwrapped a sucker and stuck it in his mouth, agitated. Maya was nice, but she had interrupted his target practice. It kind of stunk.

"Tobio, are you eating a lollipop for breakfast?"

"Yeah...why?"

"You keep that up, you're gonna get a cavity, Tobio. And when cavities rear their ugly heads, you're not gonna be happy..."



"Relax. I have a superb immune system."

"Whatever."

"Maya, what did you want to tell me again?"

"Why are you so anxious to go shoot people?"

"Answer the question."

"I just wanted to remind you that we have to be at the B-pit tomorrow at 6 pm",  
sighed an exasperated Maya.

"Oh. Right. First 50 in..."

"...gets free dinner."

"Yeah. Hey, listen, I gotta go."

"Fine, fine. Go shoot something, Tobio. And if you need a ride to the dentist, just  
let me know."

Tobio hung up.

---

One week later

---

"Hello?...ow..."

"Tobio, what's your problem?" Maya's muffled voice came through the phone.

"I...ow...I don't know, I have a sore mouth or somethin'..."

"Told you you'd get a cavity."

"No. I don't have a -OW- cavity. I just have a SORE MOUTH."

"Go to the dentist, Tobio. I'm making you an appointment."

"I can make my own appointment, and when I come back, you'll see that I'm (OW)

fine."

"We all know about your people skills. And the lack thereof. You just wait, I'll drive you."

"You can't drive, you're only 14."

"I'll drive you on the bus, by possessing the bus driver."

"Haha."

"See you on Tuesday."

---

Tuesday

---

"Hi, Tobio."

"Get off my porch!"

"Did you forget you have a dentist's appointment?"

"I'M NOT GOING."

"Yes. You are. And so help me, if I have to drag you on the bus, you are going."

Maya was not one to lie. Practical Maya, reliable Maya.

And so Tobio was dragged onto the bus.

---

2 hours later

---

Tobio emerged from the dentist moaning and groggy from anesthetic. 3 pulled teeth. 3 OF THEM. Painful. Very.

Maya smirked at him as he stumbled out.

"Have fun?"

He groaned in response and was dragged back on the bus.

The next day Maya gifted him with a pound of sugar free lollipops.

# Things that can be used as weapons

Okay, today we're featuring weapons. Happy Monday, everyone!

---

At Madoka's workshop, when Kyouya was being a jerk:

"Stand back." Kyouya threateningly waved a nacho in Madoka's face.

"Kyouya, move! I need to get to the workshop."

"Never."

"What's up with you!?"

"Stand back or else...THE NACHO."

"That's a nacho, not a sword, get me?"

"So you say."

"WHO GAVE HIM CHOCOLATE!?" Madoka demanded into the empty air.

She slipped past Kyouya, who put the nacho down her vest. She didn't notice until she went to bed that night.

---

At my house when Ryuga made me babysit the two worse villain wannabe's in history:

"Do not touch my stuff or I WILL STAB YOU."

"Oh yeah? With what?" Tobio demanded smugly of Tetsuya.

"With...with THIS!"

Tetsuya wielded a large piece of cake.

"Stab me with a piece of cake...right." Tobio then lunged for Tetsuya's stuff.

Later he had to go to the hospital because his arm had been broken by the lethal Devil's Food cake.

---

At my cousin's house while he was asleep upstairs and we were bored with nothing to do:

"You'll never take me!" Gingka leaped behind the couch, shielding himself with its trustworthy frame.

"Well I have a lightsaber. You don't." Ryuga stood over him smugly.

"I have...I have THIS!"

"This, what?"

"This...this..." Gingka was begging for a lucky break. "This secret...weapon."

"What is it?"

"It's a secret."

"No. You don't have one. Prepare to die." Ryuga stabbed at the couch with his lightsaber. Gingka screamed.

"NO! FATHERRRRRR!"

"Ryo's not here. Time's up for you."

"No, I mean, from the movie, like, NO FATHERRRR..."

"Okay, okay, I get it. Quit stalling and come die like a man."

"I don't wanna die like a man! I want to die like a screaming helpless little girl..."

"Come on, try something new for a change."

Gingka glared. Ryuga laughed heartlessly and kicked the couch.

"Owww! That's it, my...SECRET WEAPON!" Gingka leaped from behind the couch. Stood still, for a moment. And then...

"MADOKA!" He screamed and ran towards the kitchen, Ryuga in hot pursuit. On rounding the door frame he was hit with a box full of couch lint.

Turns out he's deathly allergic to couch lint. Gingka grabbed the lightsaber, stabbed Ryuga, and proclaimed himself the victor.

---

At Ryuusei's house where Tsubasa and Yu live, while I was asleep:

"Nine little monkeys, jumpin' on the bed...one jumped off and..."

"YU! WOULD YOU QUIT THAT!?" Tsubasa was on his last nerve. Yu had been repeating the song from 10 for the last 2 hours on Tsubasa's bed while he was trying to work.

Well, play Age of Mythology, actually, but same difference.

"Awwww...but whyyyyy? You said I could stayyyyy heeeeeereeee..."

"Get out. Please. You're messing me up."

"Whhhhhyyy?"

"Because you made my hand slip and my hippo got killed", Tsubasa explained, his patience waning every second.

"Cool. Can I play?"

"No. Go on."

"But I wanna-"

"NO."

Yu started to bawl. Tsubasa sighed. "Go fetch." He threw a lollipop out the door.

"OOH! OOHOOHOOHOOOOOH!" Yu ran after it. Tsubasa smirked.

A minute later...

"HEEEY! You tricked me!" Yu stomped back in the room and hit poor Tsubasa on

the head with Madoka's sweater. He swatted Tsubasa all the way out of his own room and took control of Age of Mythology, winning the entire game in less than 10 minutes and subjecting Tsubasa to a song about his amazing high score for the rest of his life.

---

At Hikaru's house, while she and Madoka were SUPPOSED to be having a girl's day out, but Dunamis asked them to watch Tithi:

"LET GO OF ME." Tithi was wailing as Hikaru tried to stuff him in the bathtub.

"But you have to take a bath, Tithi!"

"I don't want to!" Tithi hated bathtime.

Madoka heard a scuffling sound from the bathroom, but didn't investigate until a few hours later when she heard something like the toilet falling over. She found Hikaru Hasama on the floor, bound with a towel and gagged with a rubber duck...Tithi had subdued her with the toilet plunger and knocked her out using a loofah.

---

See you tomorrow everyone!

# When Tsubasa says you're grounded

Aah. It's now Tuesday, people!

Today the character list is Tsubasa, Yu, Masamune, Gingka, Ryuga, and Kyouya.

Oc list is Mj (that's me), Zayne (My BFF in real life), and RL (My cousin at whose house this is set).

---

"WEAOWEAOWEAOWEAOWEAO..."

It had been going on for hours. Tsubasa had had enough.

He stormed into the living room and threw his library book on the floor. "WILL YOU BE QUIET!?"

Everyone in the living room froze.

Yu was on top of RL, who was a car. He had a flashlight for the siren. They were chasing poor Kyouya, who was Gingka's car. Ryuga was watching (But pretending not to) from the back of the couch.

Masamune had a toy gun and was shooting from the armchair. Mj he didn't worry about; she was in RL's room reading.

But where was Zayne?

Although all the police activity had been frozen on the spot, the "WEAOWEAOWEAOWEAO" of the pretend siren was still blaring loudly. Tsubasa yanked the cover off the keyboard, and sure enough, there was Zayne. He froze in place.

"Oh, haha...Hi Tsubachan..."

"Don't call me that. EVER. NOW WILL YOU PEOPLE BE QUIET!?"

"Okay", whispered Masamune. Tsubasa picked up the abused library book and exited the scene.



Half an hour of peace and quiet later...

"WEAOWEAOWEAOWEAOWEAO..."

"MJ!" Tsubasa yelled. From the back of the house in her cousin's room, Mj called, "WHAT!?"

"COME CONTROL YOUR FREAKY FRIENDS OR I WILL!" Tsubasa hadn't got much sleep the night before. Not a good thing.

A moment later, Mj walked past the kitchen. "Oh, hey, eagle boy, what's up with you anyway?"

"Your cousin. That's what."

"Okay, Tsubachan. Keep your head level."

"Please don't call me that."

"Much better!" Mj smiled infuriatingly and headed to the living room.

"HEEEEEY!"

All heads turned to the short 13 year old quickly.

"Okay, now. You know Auntie Rence and Uncle Rey left Tsubachan in charge of us today...he's the oldest you know..."

Zayne nodded. "Following you so far."

"Ok, good. Now, as you know, Gingka gave Ryuga coffee yesterday morning and Ryusei made Tsubachan take care of him all day, so Tsubachan has not had enough sleep."

"WOULD YOU QUIT CALLING ME THAT!"

"...Anyway, do him a favor and settle down everybody, or he'll kick us into the garden and Auntie Melli's flowers will be ruined. Then we're in big trouble."

"Okay." Zayne, always polite, nodded quickly.

"RL and Zayne...make sure these 4 settle down, all right?"

"What about me?" inquired Kyouya.

"Watch over TateKyo as well."

With this Mj retreated to the kitchen.

"Happy now?"

"Whatever."

"SOMEBODY's in a mood..."

Mj grabbed a Goya drink from the fridge and sauntered back into the living room.

1 hour later...

"...WEAOWEAOWEAOWEAO..."

"ZAYNE!" Tsubasa roared into the living room. "WOULD YOU ALL BE QUIET, NOW!"

"...WEAOWEAOWEAOWEAO..."

"OKAY, THAT'S IT!"

Mj startled and fell off the armchair.

"YOU'RE ALL GROUNDED!"

"You can't ground us, CHICKEN BOY", said Kyouya, getting all up in his face.

"You're grounded."

Masamune raised his hand.

"Mj, you're not grounded. You're in charge now. I'm going outside."

"Yes, but, Auntie Rence said you were..."

"I'm in charge, and so I say, YOU'RE IN CHARGE!" Tsubasa stomped out the door.

"Oh dear."

"What does grounded mean, Mj?"

"It means no TV, no computer, no talking to friends, no phones, no nothing. Go read a book, everybody."

But there were no books. RL only had a few dictionaries.

"Ok...I guess we'll read the dictionaries."

And so they read the dictionaries.

"Mj?"

"Yes, Gingka?"

"What does erroneous mean?"

"You've got a dictionary, look it up."

"Ok."

"Mj, what's a dictionary?"

"You are reading it Masamune. That is a dictionary."

"Cool!"

"Now be quiet."

"Ok."

Mj went outside to where Tsubasa was sitting, on the porch under the metal filigree.

"Hi, eagle boy."

---

"Whatcha doing?"

"Trying to get some peace and quiet."

"Okay."

"What are the other people doing?"

"Reading dictionaries."

"Oh. OK."

Then Ryuga walked up the front lawn. "Hey, what are you guys doing out here?"

"We're just trying to get some rest from babysitting you."

"Haha. It was Gingka's fault."

"Hey, would you mind going and seeing what the people inside are doing?"

Ryuga obliged. There was Masamune, eating a piece of cake.

"Hey, are you supposed to be eating that?"

"No."

Gingka was bouncing on Auntie Rence's bed.

"Get off there."

Zayne was memorizing the dictionary with Yu. "Okay...nothing strange here."

"Kyouya, turn the TV off. You're supposed to be grounded", he heard from the living room.

"You're not the boss of me."

In the end, Zayne, Kyouya, Gingka, Masamune, and Yu were on the floor tied up with lanyards. Since RL had helped tie them up, he was set free.

"I guess when Tsubachan says you're grounded, you really are grounded."

# Ryuga's adventures in babysitting

Sorry for yesterday's missing chapter! Internet was down... :P

Also, you can send in suggestions for chapters and I'll pick one for next Wednesday.

---

The Manuel's house was crammed with kids. Mj, Luis, and Zayne had brought their 8 younger brothers and sisters to the house. Combined with Kyouya, Ryuga, Kenta, Julie, Shelby, Chloe, Yu, Tsubasa, Madoka, Emily, Isaac, Eager, Lucy, and RL's little brother Jonald, there was barely any breathing space in the small house.

Mj clambered on top of the couch and yelled to get everyone's attention.

"OKAY, OKAY, SETTLE DOWN EVERYBODY!" All heads turned towards the brown-haired girl.

"Okay. Great. RL, Kyouya, Emily, Kenta, Yu, Madoka, Luis, Matt, and Zayne, Tsubasa's van is parked out front. Everybody get in, we've got to get to the meeting on time today!" Mj, Luis, and Zayne were bringing some select few to a 4H meeting in the county that day.

The 10 people clambered out the door towards the huge van.

"Hey, wait a sec!" Mj turned to the indignant Ryuga. "You're leaving me here?"

"Yes. You went last time; it's your turn to babysit the kids. Bye now!" MJ raced out the door without another word.

Ryuga slowly turned.

There in the living room were the 8 other children he was supposed to watch. Luis's two siblings, Sebastian at 14 and Celeste at 10; Zayne's little brothers, Jonah at 11 and Lad at 8; Mj's siblings, Michael at 8 and Grace at 5 (Matt had gone to the meeting); Emily's siblings, Isaac at 14, Eager at 9, and Lucy at 6; Julie at 9, Shelby at 5, and Chloe at 2; Mj's crazy dog, Dayzi; and RL's little brother Jonald at 3.

Calm down, maybe it won't be so bad.

Sure.

He turned to Sebastian. "Why are you here?"

"I have a cold so I couldn't go to the meeting." Sebastian did not look up from his phone as he spoke. He was texting Isaac, who was right next to him.

Ryuga made a note to steer clear of the sick boy.

He looked down, feeling something pull on his coat. Down below his waist, he found Michael, Eager, and Laddie. "Can we play video games, Ryuga?"

"I...guess." Ryuga'd never babysat before.

"YAAAAY!" Ryuga could've sworn his eardrums burst.

3 seconds later Lucy's little hands shoved a game control into his hands.

"Hey, kid, what's this for?"

"We need a fourth player!" Laddie called over his shoulder.

"I'm hungry!" Jonah yelled in his other ear.

"GAAH!" Ryuga would be deaf by the end of this ordeal, if he lived through it...how did Tsubasa stay sane, babysitting so often?

"Do NOT yell in my ear, kid."

"My name's not KID. It's JONAH."

"Okay, Jonald."

"No, THAT'S Jonald." He pointed to the real Jonald, who was crying because there wasn't an extra game controller.

"Jonald, stop crying...here." Ryuga shoved his own game controller into Jonald's chubby fingers and turned to the kitchen. "I think there's a fridge in there."

"You probably shouldn't let him have soda", Isaac pointed out, barely looking up from his phone.

Too late. Jonah was drinking out of a two-liter bottle.

"Thanks for that", Ryuga growled at Isaac. "Help me tie him down." But Jonah was too fast to catch. He ran over Julie, who was crying after being bit by the dog Mj had so kindly left on Ryuga's hands. Poor Ryuga was greatly outnumbered.

He wrestled the dog out into the garden and placed Julie in a kitchen chair. Shelby threw a doll at his head and Chloe wouldn't quit bothering Sebastian.

Where was Celeste?

There were too many kids here.

He ran into the yard, calling Celeste's name. If she was gone, her mom would kill him. Then her big brothers would kill him again.

He ran through the house and found her asleep in a closet. He wiped the cold sweat off his face and steered the sleepy girl into the living room, where Jonald had broke the TV.

He picked up the doll Shelby had threw at him and handed it back to her.

"Don't throw stuff, kid."

"Okay."

He gave Julie an ice cube from the freezer for her knee and removed Chloe from the bathtub. Shelby was playing quietly in the hallway.

"Here...watch your sister..." He plopped Chloe down beside Shelby and went to fix the chaos in the living room. He grabbed Jonah as he raced past and shut him in RL's bedroom, then went to see if the TV could be fixed. He shoved Jonald at Isaac. "Here, you're not doing anything."

"I'm trying to play a game."

"It can wait", he snarled. He was getting aggravated.

Ryuga shoved a book into Laddie's hands and plugged the TV back in, putting on a show for the other kids. Sebastian handed Jonald to him, and Ryuga set the kid in front of the TV. He collapsed on the armchair, panting.

Until Lad put the book in his lap. "I can't read."

Then Michael said, "Ryuga?...I'm not allowed to watch this show." Ryuga tossed him the remote, and Michael settled on a show about animals.

Ryuga shut his eyes for a moment and contemplated sedatives.

BANG. BANG. BANG. CRASH! Ryuga whirled and fell out of the chair. He could see Jonah rushing down the hall at full speed; Julie had let him out of the bedroom. He caught the boy and shoved him in the backyard with Dayzi. Then Shelby said she wanted spaghetti.

"No. You may not have spaghetti."

"But I want..."

"You can't have it. I have to go get the dog." Then Chloe gave him a cat she found from somewhere. He put it in Jonald's lap and went out the door.

A horrible sight met him.

Jonah was sitting in the middle of the yard, panting with exhaustion. The garden was ripped to pieces.

And Dayzi was nowhere in sight. Mj would kill him.

He led Jonah back in and took Sebastian and Isaac's phones. "Watch the kids. I'll be right back." He grabbed Auntie Rence's keys from the counter and started the car, driving all around the neighborhood about 50 times and finally finding Dayzi rolling around in the neighbor's garden.

Ryuga brought the puppy back to the house; she was finally tired and fell asleep at Isaac's feet.

But he was assaulted by a million voices.

"Can we have our phones back now?"

"Ryuga, I don't like this show..."

"Eager won't let me..."



"Lucy took Chloe's toys!"

"Mr. Ryuga, Jonald's actually allergic to cats..."

"QUIET!"

A stunned silence fell over the 13 kids, the cat, and the dog.

He told the older boys they could have their phones when they cleaned up the garden. He sent Jonah to fix RL's ruined bedroom. Shelby, Julie, Michael, Eager, Lucy, Chloe, Laddie, and Gracie were content to watch TV. Celeste woke up at that moment and he gave her the remote. Ryuga found Jonald's allergy shot in the kitchen drawer and gave it to him. He tossed the keys on the counter, gave Shelby a snack to substitute for her spaghetti, and fell onto the couch.

3 hours later, when Emily, Mj, Luis, Zayne, Kyouya, Tsubasa, Yu, Kenta, Matt, RL, and Madoka returned from their meeting, Shelby, Jonah, Julie, Michael, Eager, Jonald, Lucy, Chloe, Laddie, and Gracie were asleep in front of the TV, while Sebastian and Isaac were back on their phones and Ryuga was staring out the window and once again contemplating sedatives.

"Hey, Ryuga!" Mj said, while Tsubasa and Kyouya carried the kids to the van. "How'd it go?"

"Fine."

"Cool!" Mj picked Shelby up off the floor and headed to the door.

"Mj?" Shelby's sleepy little voice carried back to Ryuga. "Can Ryuga babysit us every single time?"

"Sure." Ryuga blanched.

He told himself to be away in Venezuela the next time 4H came around.

# Excerpt: Out of Control

Hi y'all, have a great Friday! SMile and I'll see you on Monday, and don't forget to send in requests for Wednesday!

---

"WAKE UP!"

Tsubasa jolted upright to find Kenta standing over him with a dictionary.

"What's the big idea, Kenta? I'm trying to sleep!"

"Tsubasa, you have GOT to come out here. NOW."

"What's the matter?" groaned the sleepy teenager. Woe befall you should you interrupt a sleeping Tsubasa.

"Everyone's on caffeine pills!"

Tsubasa gasped. "What?"

"Tsubasa, SOMEBODY PUT CAFFEINE PILLS IN EVERYONE'S FOOD."

"Go get Madoka to deal with it", groaned Tsubasa, and rolled over to sleep again.

"Madoka's food was also caffeinated."

"No..."

Tsubasa and Madoka were the only sane people in the manor. If she was gone, Tsubasa was virtually on his own.

He stumbled into the kitchen. This was the first thing he heard:

"GUMMYBEARSGUMMYBEARSGUMMYBEARSGUMMYBEARSGUMMYBEAR  
SGUMMYBEARSGUMMYBEARSGUMMYBEARSGUMMYBEARSGUMMYBEAR S..."  
It was Kyouya. Worse than the time he was on chocolate.

"WHO WOULD DO THIS!?" He whirled on Kenta.

"I..I have no idea! It wasn't Masamune or Gingka, they wouldn't have poisoned their own food. It wasn't me, and you and Ryuga wouldn't do this to yourselves."

"Ryuga...we'd better go get him", murmured Tsubasa. He and Kenta headed for the stairs.

Kyouya attempted to follow them, but collapsed on the steps.  
"Alisdhsfdjkhanscafbahf..."

Kenta threw a distressed look in Kyouya's direction. "We'd better hurry." He raced up the stairs ahead of Tsubasa and flung open Ryuga's bedroom door.

Ryuga wasn't there.

What they did find was Gingka, prowling around like a cat and roaring at the bed. He focused his feral gaze on Tsubasa and let out a menacing growl. Tsubasa slammed the door shut and locked it from the outside.

"Look up", gasped Kenta. Oh, so that's where Ryuga was. He was on the chandelier above the foyer, screaming like a little girl.

"Okay, it's okay, Ryuga. We'll get you down."

"I-I don't w-want to come d-down", gasped Ryuga.

"Why?"

"B-because this house is f-filled with M-MANIACS!"

"Come on, Kenta. We've got other things to worry about."

"What if he falls off the chandelier?"

"Let's put the couch under it just in case."

But halfway down the staircase they heard a scream.

It was Paige-from-the-future, standing in the foyer with a bag of groceries, looking up at the chandelier.

"Guys! What's he doing on my chandelier!?" She yelled at Tsubasa and Kenta.

"He's hiding from Gingka who's locked in his bedroom."

"Ooo..kay. WHAT IS GOING ON!?"

"Somebody put caffeine pills in the soup last night", Kenta piped up.

"Who would do that?", mused Tsubasa once more.

Masamune grabbed a cucumber from FuturePaige's grocery bag and started swatting Yu with it.

"I bet I know who did it", FuturePaige intoned gravely, dropping the grocery bags. She raised her arms dramatically.

"MJ, You have been summoned!"

All of a sudden, with a pop like a hundred bursting balloons, a brown haired girl appeared in the living room. It was MJ, the girl who had somehow learned to control the world of Beyblade.

"Uh..oh hi, FuturePaige. I was in the middle of brushing my teeth, do you have to summon me at the worst of times?"

Tobii ran by with pants on his head.

"WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT!?" FuturePaige yelled angrily.

MJ tugged at the hem of her pajama shirt anxiously. "I brush my teeth so I don't get cavities, silly...it's night where I live, you know..."

"No, I mean GET EVERYONE HYPER."

"Oh. I'm trying to win a contest." She looked up at the chandelier. "Oh, hi there, Ryu-chi!...you know, you better get him off that. The thing's gonna fall soon."

"You are NOT gonna crash my chandelier."

"Okay, okay. You guys have fun now!" AND there went MJ in a cloud of smoke, the one person who could get rid of the problem.

"Ryuga, get down!" called Paige.

"N-no way!"

"What if she really does make the chandelier fall down?"

"She won't do that, Ryuga's her favorite. She'd never kill him."

"She might, you know..."

"Nah." At that moment, Masamune hurled his lethal cucumber in Kenta's direction and Kenta passed out.

"LEAVE HIM! SAVE YOURSELF!" screamed FuturePaige.

"WE NEVER LEAVE A MAN BEHIND!" Tsubasa scooped up Kenta and he and FuturePaige raced towards his bedroom. He slammed the door shut and locked it.

"What do we do now?" panted FuturePaige.

"Let's climb out the window and escape to the mall until the caffeine wears off."

"Good idea."

FuturePaige and Tsubasa climbed out the window and ran to the front of the manor where there was a road towards the mall. But they were stopped by a stocky bald man in a suit.

"Who are you?"

"My name is Butler. I'm here to stop you from leaving the manor."

"Why?...Who put you up to this?"

"A short brown haired girl in pajamas with snappy hair kidnapped Artemis Fowl and said if I don't do what she says we'll never see him again."

"Oh, NOW SHE'S JUST CHEATING!" FuturePaige screamed. "MJ, YOU ARE SUMMONED!"

The next thing he knew, Tsubasa was smacked in the head with a large stuffie. Great, first the dictionary and now this!?

A furious MJ stood behind him in her pajamas with a huge panda under her arm.

"FUTUREPAIGE, I AM TRYING TO SLEEP!"

"Evidently you're awake enough to kidnap Artemis Fowl."

"FuturePaige, if you don't watch it, I'm going to start dreaming about Beyblade when I go to sleep. And when I dream about Beyblade, BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO YOU!"

"Okay, okay!"

"And FuturePaige..."

"Y..yeah?"

"Your chandelier will fall tonight." MJ gave Tsubasa and FuturePaige an ominous look, and then disappeared. Butler shoved them both back inside.

Ryuga screamed again as the front door opened. FuturePaige sighed. "What's the one thing that will make them be quiet?"

Tsubasa was about to answer when Nile raced past on a horse he had got from somewhere and Zeo chased after him furiously, yelling "NILE GET OFF MY UNICORNZ!"

His answer was lost in the sea of ruckus.

Then FuturePaige screamed. Tsubasa turned to her, alarmed, to find a piranha-monkey trying to eat her leg. He flung the fish at Tobii and knelt down beside FuturePaige.

"FuturePaige, what's happening?"

"Nooo..." she moaned.

"What is it?"

"She's dreaming about us..."

And then the chandelier fell.

All was silent for a moment as FuturePaige and Tsubasa stared in horror at the jumble of glass and twisted bronze.

And then: "Where's Ryuga?" Cried Tsubasa. FuturePaige looked up and he followed her gaze; Ryuga was hanging on to the banister. And then MJ appeared and pulled him over the rail to the floor of the stair walkway, and he gasped like a fish out of water.

"There's mah good deed fer the day", she drawled, winked at FuturePaige, and disappeared once more.

"That's it!" screamed FuturePaige. "I'm outta here!" And then she too disappeared, in a flash of blue lightning. FuturePaige had gone back to the future, where she was JustPaige.

And Tsubasa was alone.

A scream from the kitchen brought him running.

There in the midst of the kitchen table was a girl, a girl he'd never seen before. His eyes widened in surprise. "What on earth are you doing here!?"

"I got whisked here by a coupla psychos-some girl who had pajamas on and a weird Mexican guy..."

"MJ and Luis," murmured Tsubasa. "So who are you?"

"My name's Autumn and I'm supposed to be taking over earth. BUT FOR SOME REASON I'M HERE."

"Ooo...kay. This is the situation-" And then suddenly everybody was in the kitchen, even Madoka who had her head stuck in the fridge. Things were going in fast forward, everything spun. Autumn screamed and pulled out a sword.

Zeo, Toby, Masamune, Gingka, Yuu, Nile, Madoka, and the fridge swirled past in a flurry of limbs and then ran into the living room, pulling Tsubasa and Autumn along with them. They deposited the two people on the couch and disappeared.

Things were getting seriously weird.

Everybody ran upstairs and stomped on Ryuga and then disappeared into the bedrooms. Kyouya got up off the stairs and resumed his gummy bear war cry. Tsubasa ran to the second floor landing, grabbed Ryuga, and pulled him through the wreckage of the chandelier into the kitchen, along with Autumn.

"Autumn?"

"Yeah?"

"Where did you get that sword?"

"Oh, uh. I carry it around."

The only one left in the kitchen was Dunamis, who was cutting up spaghetti with a cleaver.

"Where did that spaghetti come from?" Gasped Ryuga.

"I have no idea."

"Hungry?" Laughed Dunamis evilly. Autumn chased him out of the kitchen with her sword. Out the window, Ryuga and Tsubasa could see Masamune dumping Butler into the pool.

Suddenly a huge piano crashed through the ceiling and turned into a million tiny rainbows.

"MJ! WAKE UP!" wailed Ryuga desperately. The rainbows turned back into a piano and walked out the door.

Gingka crashed through the wall with scissors of doom, followed by Madoka who still had the fridge on her head. Tsubasa hoisted Ryuga and Autumn and her sword over both shoulders and raced to his room where Kenta was still asleep. He unlocked the door, rushed in again, and locked the door behind him. It was then that he realised Autumn was still outside. He unlocked it and yanked her in the door.

"Let's stay here until the caffeine wears off", gasped Tsubasa.

Autumn stood menacingly. "I'm sick of this. I should be back at the winter fortress by now. LUIS! I SUMMON YOU!"

A 6-foot-tall Mexican boy suddenly popped into the room, looking dazed.

"What on earth is happening in here?"

"You and that girl MJ summoned Autumn here and ruined our lives!" Screamed Ryuga and Tsubasa.



"That girl..." muttered Luis.

"WELL, FIX IT!"

"Okay, okay. I'll see what I can do. MATT! I SUMMON YOU!" A little boy with a fake machine gun came and started shooting the window. "MATT! Stop that! I need you to go wake up your sister."

"With a bucket of ranch dressing?"

"If you could find one, that would be good."

"MAKE SURE IT GETS IN HER EYES", hissed Ryuga evilly.

"Good deal." And Matt was gone.

"Autumn, I summon you to the Winter Fortress!" Autumn was gone. Then MJ reappeared in the room, covered in ranch dressing.

"FIX IT", snarled Tsubasa.

"Okay, okay. Kindel Manor, I summon you to state of the previous day!" Instantly the damage of Kindel Manor was fixed.

"All bodies present with caffeine-I summon you to Unconscious state!" Snoring was heard a floor down.

"Ryuga! I summon you to regular earth!"

"Why'd you do that?"

"He needs help getting out of his state of shock. FuturePaige, you've been summoned!"

FuturePaige was back in her house.

"Luis!"

"Yeah?"

"I summon you to regular earth!" And she and Luis vanished.

Tsubasa and FuturePaige stared at each other, astounded.

And then, Tsubasa said: "I'm going back to bed."

"You do that. Man, caffeine pills should totally be outlawed..." And FuturePaige went to eat breakfast with the walking piano.

---

There it is! Hope you liked it!

Autumn and the Winter Fortress are accredited to my BFF Luis. That's all!

# Save him some chips, they said

Hi, I'm back! Happy Monday, everyone!

This is inspired by my younger brothers, Rebel02 and Michael.

OC's: Me (Mj), Mikey (My brother), and Matt (Also my brother)

IC's: Kyouya, Tsubasa

---

"When's lunch ready?"

"I SAID, just a MINUTE." Mj was getting a little miffed. Not only were her brothers and Kyouya bothering her, the casserole her mom had left would simply not heat up.

10 minutes and 8 botherances later, Mj snatched the casserole out of the oven and back into the fridge. "Forget this. I hate cooking. We're ordering a pizza."

"Do they deliver all the way out here?" Kyouya wondered. Mj lived in a remote little town outside the main city limits, and you couldn't get much of anything in less than 20 minutes minimum.

"Tsubasa can pick one up on his way."

She sent her little brother to call Tsubasa. He came back with Tsubasa's consent.

"He said he'll do it if we save some of those potato chips for him." Matt pointed to the chips on the table.

"Ok."

"Let's open them, so we can have some before lunch", Mikey suggested.

"Fine, just don't eat all of them. I'm going to read a book."

Mj exited the room. Big mistake.

Mikey eagerly ripped open the plastic bag.

"Ooh, this one's a good batch."

"How do you know?" Skeptical Kyouya is skeptical.

"I can smell it."

"Gimme that." Kyouya smelled the chips.

"Okay, maybe it is a good batch." Pretty soon all three boys were sitting around the table eating chips. Matt attempted to make conversation with his sister's friend, which didn't happen.

Matt, in an exasperated surrender, grabbed a library book from the middle of the table. He swung it too wide, however...

...and the chips went flying.

Matt, Mikey, and Kyouya stared in dismay at the chips on the floor. Only a tiny bit remained in the bottom of the bag.

"Nooo!" Matt wailed.

"Tsubasa's gonna be so mad..."

"And when Tsubasa's mad..."

"You know what happens..."

"BAD THINGS HAPPEN." The boys repeated the phrases that Mj had burned onto their brains. Then they continued.

"And when Tsubasa's mad, Mj gets mad, and when they're both mad, EVERYBODY DIES!"

Kyouya sat stunned at the rush of words. Then it sank in. He knew that the authoress could cause things to turn into crazy stories, and Tsubasa tended to give her bad ideas. At least it didn't involve him.

"Well, it's not my problem anyway." He voiced his carelessness.

The boys turned to him, aghast. "Don't you care about the fate of the next generation and humans in general? DON'T YOU CARE ABOUT THE WORLD!?" They

wailed.

Kyouya thought a minute. "Hmmm...no."

"We have to stop Tsubasa and Mj's wrath somehow!" Matt was attempting to shake the older boy.

"What are you gonna do, wash them off?"

"Hey! That's a great idea!" Because they're boys.

Matt and Mikey gathered the chips into a bowl (Well, the ones the dog hadn't eaten), and put them in the sink, running water and soap into the bowl. Then they stirred it around with a wooden spoon. They got a soggy mess.

"M-maybe he won't notice...?" Mikey suggested.

"Ew. That tastes like soap."

"Matt! YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO TASTE IT!"

"Why?"

"I think it needs more flavor." Mikey squirted half a bottle of mustard into the bowl and stirred it vigorously.

Then they gave the spoon to Kyouya.

"What?...Oh, thanks." Kyouya licked it off absentmindedly.

"AGH! PLAH, OH PLAH PLAH PLAAGH! WHAT ON EARTH IS THAT!?"

"Tsubasa's potato chips, can't you tell?"

"NO. It tastes like MUSHY SOAP WITH MUSTARD IN IT!"

The boys' solution was to cover it with salt and pepper and microwave it for 10 minutes. All this happened in quick succession as the dog spit out each coming recipe and finally managed to stomach the microwaved version.

"Yay! The dog like it! That must mean Tsubasa'll like it too!" Because they're still boys.

During their cooking adventure, they realised that Kyouya had eaten all but the last chip. Matt lunged for it.

He rose from the floor with the triumphant chip. "HAHA! I am VICTORIOUS!" He danced around, waving the chip in Kyouya's face. "I got the last chip, I got the last chip..." Kyouya snatched it from his hand.

"NOO! WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?"

Kyouya slowly crushed the potato chip and sprinkled it on the floor. The dog sprang at it eagerly, happy for something better than the boys' concoction.

Matt jumped on top of Kyouya and started trying to choke him. Soon they were rolling on the floor. Yup, they're still boys, like the last time you checked.

At that moment, Tsubasa walked in.

"Hi, what are you guys doing?"

Matt jumped up. "Oh. Pfft...nothing, why would you ask that? Why would we be doing anything?"

"Mmm." Tsubasa wandered absently into the kitchen. He'd had a long day. Then he saw the empty chip bag and whirled to face the living room.

"Did you guys eat all the chips?"

"Oh, of course not!" He looked down as Mikey shoved the bowl into his hands. "We saved them all for you! Taste it!"

Tsubasa looked sadly at the mess in the bowl.

"No thanks, you guys."

Mj wandered in to find a rather disappointed-looking Tsubasa and a smiling Mikey and Matt.

"What did you DO!"

"Uh, nothing! Pfft...we did nothing."

Mj glared at the ruined kitchen, at the open microwave and the splatters of

mustard on the counter.

"You are SO BUSTED."

"Hi Candace..."

"NOT FUNNY!" Mj made Kyouya drive Matt and Mikey back to town to pick up another bag of chips, and Tsubasa took the rest of the day off from work. I guess they got lucky.

Well that's what they thought too. They came back with the wrong chips.

# When you give Kyouya a truck

Happy Tuesday!

I ended letters to the crew yesterday. It was sad. On that happy note...

Give Tuesday a smile, you guys!

Ocs for today: Me

Ics: Kyouya, Ryuga, Tsubasa

Credit for the chapter title goes to my brother!

---

Mj walked out to the driveway with her fists clenched at her sides. Her driveway, which usually contained 3 cars, now contained only two. She glared at the pop-art covered truck two streets away, standing out like a piano in the middle of a field of sunflowers, and whipped out her cell phone.

"What?" Kyouya's greeting was as listless as ever. Good for him.

"WHERE IS MY TRUCK!?"

Mj had to be the only person alive who could strike fear into the hearts of men twice her size.

"Uhh...in your...driveway?"

"KYOUYA. I AM STANDING IN MY DRIVEWAY NOW. IT'S EMPTY!"

"...oh..."

"Kyouya, turn the truck around."

"I can't turn around now, I'm practically in town already."

"Kyouya, I can see you. I think it's early enough to turn around."

Mj watched angrily as the airbrushed truck turned around, almost reluctantly, and



journeyed two streets down to where she stood at the end of the kalichi driveway near the road.

She opened the front door and slid into the seat. Almost instantly she was composed of rage and violence.

Yeah, good morning to you too, Mj.

"YOU STOLE MY TRUCK! AGAIN!"

"I didn't steal it", Kyouya protested indignantly.

"Oh. No, of COURSE you didn't STEAL it, you would absolutely NEVER do that. All you did was find the spare house key, SNEAK INTO MY ROOM, AND TAKE MY KEYS!"

"I didn't take them", he answered sulkily after a few minutes. "Your mom gave them to me."

"Really? That's your excuse?"

"Well you would've given it to me, anyhow."

"No I wouldn't've. I work on Thursdays and I need the truck! You know that."

"...oh."

"Seems like that's all you've been saying all morning."

Kyouya was quiet.

They reached the animal shelter, where Mj would get yelled at for being late. As usual.

As Kyouya hopped towards the driver's seat again, Mj stopped him. "Oh, Nuh-uh. You're walking. You're not taking my truck ever again."

Mj, with all her 96 pounds, had to be the only girl on earth who could control an unwilling grown man without laying a finger on him.

Kyouya sighed, rolled his eyes, and dropped the keys into her outstretched palm. Then he started his slouching scuffle to wherever he was going.

"Kyouya, you'll be trouble someday", Mj murmured softly.

Then she turned and went inside.

---

"Tsubasa, you absolutely HAVE to help Kyouya buy a truck." Mj's voice came out slightly muffled through Tsubasa's cell phone.

"M...I don't have to do anything, really", he reminded her softly.

"But Tsubasa...please?"

Mj had to be the only person alive who could activate puppy dog eyes over the phone.

"Well, I...I guess I could drop him off."

"Thanks." And then Mj was gone, the soft programmed click at the end of the call signifying her absence.

"What did I just get myself into?" Tsubasa wondered aloud.

20 minutes of screaming and kicking later, Tsubasa, Ryuga, and Kyouya stood in front of an old used car dealership at the back of one of the less...well...neighborly neighborhoods.

"Okay, okay, guys. I don't need your help." A flustered Kyouya marched into the car dealership.

"Wow. The one time in his life that he lifts his shoes from the ground", marveled Ryuga.

They had to call in the SWAT team in the form of Mj moments later. It took her nearly 6 hours to get Kyouya out of there with his new old beat-up chevy.

"Tsubasa, why didn't you go in with him?"

Mj had to be the only person in the world who could stare down at you from over a foot below you.

"He insisted that nobody follow him. He held us at gunpoint."

"Have fun when he shows up at your door asking for a loan for car insurance."

---

Speaking of insurance, Kyouya appeared at Mj's door 2 weeks later, asking to borrow her truck.

"What on earth did you do to yours?"

Kyouya had stayed 4 hours at a 3 hour parking lot and gotten towed. Mj sent him to Zayne's.

Over the next month, Kyouya managed not only to get his truck towed, but he also ran over a deer, knocked down a tree, and finally crashed through the wall of a supermarket. This totaled his poor chevy and got him fined 1000 dollars.

Finally Zayne, Mj, and Tsubasa took pity for the sake of humanity and bought him a bike for his birthday. What he'd wanted was an ATV, but Kyouya was never getting anything with more than two wheels again.

# Excerpt: Prototype 1

Well, no suggestions for today, so I'm putting a little excerpt from Prototype 1.

Happy Wednesday!

---

Ryo Hagane was, as usual, subjected to a rude awakening.

"DAD! Wake up! IT'S CHRISTMAS!"

Ryo sat bolt upright in bed. He couldn't believe he'd forgotten.

"Oh, son, I-WHY, YOU-! It's September, Gingka!"

"Aw. Man."

It was then that Ryo noticed his son was wearing a baseball glove on his head.  
"Just who are you supposed to be, son?"

"Mrs. Darth Vader!"

"Ooo...kay. Cut down on the caffeine pills, will you?"

"Nope!"

"Son...why are you wearing a shirt for pants?" Gingka was indeed wearing a shirt over his jeans.

"Because it's opposite day...can we have ice cream for breakfast, dad?"

"No."

"YAAAAY!"

"Wait-what?"

"It's opposite day so we CAN have ice cream! Since you said no."

"Okay, then...yes."

"WOOHOO!"

"But I thought it was opposite day!"

"Nope, I lied."

"Go mess around with Masamune or something..."

"Okay, dad."

Gingka was gone, leaving his father to dress in peace...

...supposedly.

"DIRECTOR!" Hikaru pounded furiously on the door of his bedroom.

"What?"

"Masamune is wearing my jacket!"

"Okay, okay. I'll be out in a minute!"

Ryo stumbled over a skateboard in the hallway and grabbed Masamune by the back of the neck as he ran past. "Give Hikaru back her jacket now."

"Okay...fine. But it fits my complexion perfectly, don't you think?" He struck a model pose.

"Now."

"FIIINE..."

Ryo commandeered the jacket and returned it to Hikaru, who was glaring murderously at Masamune. "Ok, you two. Skedaddle."

After which, Ryo barricaded himself into his office. Literally. He used a couch. He was surprised he'd survived through breakfast with his son.

He sighed and grabbed the coffee cup off his desk. Then he remembered the coffee pot was in the hallway, beyond his safehouse that was represented by the couch. Perhaps he could go without caffeine for a day?

Or a week?

Who knew how long he'd be barricaded in here. Only to save his life.

Ryo would have preferred a peaceful day, for once in his life. He would have loved the thought of sitting down at a desk for only 8 hours a day instead of 10, drinking coffee without fearing for his neck each time he set foot in the hallway, perhaps having no children terrorizing the place morning noon and night.

But such thoughts had altogether ceased to enter his mind. He had long before learned that to entertain them meant only heartbreak, and that to strive for them meant only emergency room charges and police chases.

He managed to avoid the kids for a few hours that morning, but soon realised he should've packed a sack lunch. Now the cafeteria was the only option. Maybe they wouldn't be there.

Ryo dramatically tiptoed down the hallway, lifting his knees high, arms in a crow-like position that Jack Sparrow would have approved of had he been there.

Perhaps a babysitting pirate would be the only thing that could control his son and Masamune.

Ryo found himself discovered all too soon. Gingka ran past, waving a fish in the air. Ryo decided he'd never seen a thing and tried to continue to the cafeteria, but he was stopped by Masamune with a spear.

"Where did you get that!?"

"The basement! I love the basement!"

"We don't have a basement..."

"Then where did I get THIS!?"

Ryo found the spear waving uncomfortably close to his face.

"Put it down. What are you doing?"

"Surviving in the wild just like Tsubasa!"

"You're not Tsubasa. Now go watch TV."

"Hikaru won't let us."

"Masamune", Ryo said gently, "That was the security camera feed."

"Yeah, we saw you sneaking out of the room for coffee, dad! It was funny when you squeezed around the couch!" Gingka made Ryo jump and caused his ribs to ache in remembrance of the sacrifice for the sake of coffee.

"Where did you get that fish, son?"

"From the fish store in the basement!"

"We don't have a fish store. Or a basement."

"Then where did I get this fish?"

"I don't know, son. Put it away." Gingka obediently put it in the fish sheath at his hip.

Since when did his son carry a fish sheath?

Ryo had learned to ignore it.

He was dragged to a torturous lunch with the boys. Then, around 4 that afternoon, Hikaru's voice crackled tiredly through his intercom.

"Sir, Tsubasa's back." Then she screamed.

Ryo raced downstairs. The reason for intense screamage, as he soon found, was Ryuga's sudden reappearance. Ryo ignored him and focused on the happy fact that Tsubasa was back to babysit.

## Excerpt: Other Side

Well, since right now I'm on vacation and you'll be lucky if i even remembered to post this, I'm doing another excerpt, this time from Other Side.

---

A large, infuriating unicorn danced through Ryuga's dreams as he tossed and turned on the couch, mentally surrounded by floating penguins and evil minions. It was all so surreal.

He was jerked back to reality as somebody shook him by the shoulders. "Hey! HEEEEYYY! DRAGON-BOY! WAKE UP!"

Ryuga blinked sleepily. "Wh-wha..."

A month after the fight in the alley, Ryuga was still stuck at Kelle's. His sprained ankle was now healed, but she had reminded him of his lack of money and allowed him to stay with her until he got back on his feet.

"You're getting a job today."

"But it's sooo early..."

"Get up."

"Why do you have to be my personal alarm clock?" He snapped.

"Because I'm not leaving you in this apartment asleep alone for the hour late you like to wake up, while I work my head off in a greasy fast food restaurant for 8 hours a day. Hit the street, dragon-boy, or I'm sending you to labor-ready."

"Fine", he grumbled, sitting up. His mouth tasted of morning breath and he'd fallen asleep with his headband on; his scalp was all sore now.

"And don't call me dragon-boy."

"Whatever. I want you to meet me for lunch at that cafe down by that alley...you know the one. Your poor foot knows the one. And your empty wallet also knows the one." The smug look on Kelle's face was infuriating. Like the evil unicorn of dreams.



"Why can't we just eat lunch at that restaurant you work at?"

Kelle made a face. "Are you kidding me? I have to work there. I'm not eating there, too."

Ryuga had to laugh. But only a little.

Kelle glanced at her watch. "Oi. I have to go. You better not be on this couch at lunch time."

And without another word, she whisked out the door, leaving a still-drowsy Ryuga in her living room.

Ryuga wandered through Kyoto with his now ever-present map, searching for a job. The idea was to save enough money to rent an apartment, and go from there.

He filled out at least 10 job applications that morning.

First name: Ryuga

Second name: George (He didn't have a middle name, so he made up one on each form. He'd gone through George, Kyle, Harrison, Miles, and many others.)

Last name: None

Address: Cardboard box (That one he put because he didn't want to admit he was living with a friend.)

Alternate address: Dumpster

Home phone: Here he surrendered and put Kelle's phone number.

How did you learn about our company? "I walked through the door looking for a job."

Position sought: Boss.

Available start date: Tomorrow.

Desired pay range (By hour or salary): Every day

Are you currently employed? Probably not.

High school: High school of the homeschooled (And by homeschooled, he meant none.)

Graduate? No.

Degree? About 71 Fahrenheit.

Major subjects of study: Running away, hurting people

College: Volcano

Graduate? Yes.

Degree? Hot enough to cook a cow.

Major subject of study: Not falling in.

Special training? Art of reading maps.

Graduate? Not yet.

Major subject of study: Holding the map correctly.

Other education? No.

Please list your special skills: Chasing people off, scaring children, kicking stuff, filling out job applications, breaking limbs, yelling, evil laughter

Not surprisingly, he didn't get a single job that day.

By midday it was sweltering. Ryuga relished in the thought of air conditioning, and headed to the restaurant.

"Oh, you finally got here." His happiness was short-lived.

Kelle hadn't waited for him to get there; she already had a burger in her hand. He was mildly offended. Ryuga was always mildly offended. And mildly offensive, too.

He ordered a meal and sat down to wait for the waitress. The waitress was the one who was supposed to be doing the waiting here. It wasn't fair.

"Hey look. I stopped by that toy store on the way over here cuz..."

Ryuga had learned when to tune out Kelle. Now was one of those times.

"Look! We're dragon buddies..."

Ryuga looked at Kelle in alarm. She was shaking a stuffed dragon in his face.

"Ey. Quit that. We're not dragon buddies, kid."

"I'm not a kid, dragon buddy."

Having her happy was both a blessing and a curse. But having her mad was a flat-out curse. That made having her happy a little better, but not by much.

"Oh you know that movie that's coming out?...the one about that guy who had this friend whose dog was about to have puppies but they thought it was a boy..."

Now was another one of those times.

Finally the waitress brought him the food.

"...and they filmed it like right near here...the ninja turtle guy was in it. What was his name again? Oh yeah, it was..."

Ryuga concentrated on his burger.

"...hey, you look sad. Are you sad, DRAGON BUDDY?"

"Kelle, you're annoying."

"No I'm not. I'm just regular. You just don't know how to deal with regularness because you came from a cave in the sea."

"I cam from a city east of here. Is regularness even a word?"

"It exists, no?"

"No."

"Oohh...this sounds like one of those philosophy things, like that time when the guy's daughter had this friend whose uncle was..."

Was it ever not one of those times?

Ryuga concentrated on the table. There was a hand in his fries. A really small, alive, wiggly one...

He followed the hand. Down. Shorter than the table, pink haired and brown capped, was a little girl. Or a boy. He couldn't actually tell. The kid was taking his fries. He yelped, startled at this tiny creature who was reaching up to the table.

"Gah! Kid, you scared me to death! Go on, shoo!"

"Hey, be nice to Maru..."

"The baby thing was stealing my fries! AGAIN! My fries are ALWAYS GETTING STOLEN!"

"Ryuga, you're causing a scene-"

"YOU'RE causing a scene!"

"Ryuga! Don't..."

Ryuga stood up too fast and the table tipped over onto its side, rolling through the diner and terrorizing the pedestrians as it crashed through the door and into oncoming traffic.

"WHO ON EARTH DID THAT?" Ryuga yelled loudly. Kelle glared as she tried to comfort the spooked Maru.

And then the owner of the restaurant came stomping up to Kelle.

"KELLE WATSON! WHO ON EARTH IS THAT!?"

"It's my, uh...friend's neighbor's dog's cousin's owner's mechanic's dentist's son's father-in-law's daughter's sister's cousin's friend's obscure relative's colleague's aunt's daughter's fiance's brother's teacher's nephew's...son."

"Well, tell your friend's neighbor's dog's cousin's owner's mechanic's dentist's son's father-in-law's daughter's sister's cousin's friend's obscure relative's colleague's aunt's daughter's fiance's brother's teacher's nephew..."

"His son.."

"Yeah, tell your friend's neighbor's dog's cousin's owner's mechanic's dentist's

son's father-in-law's daughter's sister's cousin's friend's obscure relative's colleague's aunt's daughter's fiancée's brother's teacher's nephew's son to clean up this mess."

"Okay. Hey, friend's neighbor's dog's cousin's owner's mechanic's dentist's son's father-in-law's daughter's sister's cousin's friend's obscure relative's colleague's aunt's daughter's fiancée's brother's teacher's nephew's son, come here and clean this up. Hey, do you have any job openings?"

"As a matter of fact, I do. How about your teacher's brother's dog's friend..."

"Friend's neighbor's dog's cousin's owner's mechanic's dentist's son's father-in-law's daughter's sister's cousin's friend's obscure relative's colleague's aunt's daughter's fiancée's brother's teacher's nephew's son..."

"Yeah. Him. Tell him he can work here and he'll get a monthly deduction to pay this off little by little."

"Okay. Hey, Friend's neighbor's dog's cousin's owner's mechanic's dentist's son's father-in-law's daughter's sister's cousin's friend..."

"I heard her, Kelle."

"You mean, your dad's aunt's student's brother's fiancée's mom's nephew's colleague's obscure relative's friend's cousin's sister's dad's son-in-law's father's patient's client's dog's cousin's owner's neighbor."

"Whatever, Kelle." Ryuga stomped out of the restaurant.

"Here, Maru, you can have his fries." Kelle hurried after him before he dropped an anvil on a park or something.

"Hey, Friend's neighbor's dog's cousin's owner's mechanic's dentist's son's father-in-law's daughter's sister's cousin's friend's obscure relative's colleague's aunt's daughter's fiancée's brother's teacher's nephew's son."

"I'm not your father's brother's aunt's niece's daughter's dog's cousin."

"That would make me the dog's cousin's owner's mom's aunt's brother's father's daughter. I'm your dad's aunt's student's brother's fiancée's mom's nephew's colleague's obscure relative's friend's cousin's sister's dad's son-in-law's father's patient's client's dog's cousin's owner's neighbor, which would make you my

Friend's neighbor's dog's cousin's owner's mechanic's dentist's son's father-in-law's daughter's sister's cousin's friend's obscure relative's colleague's aunt's daughter's fiance's brother's teacher's nephew's son..."

"I'm not your son."

"No, you're my Friend's neighbor's dog's cousin's owner's..."

"KELLE!"

"Okay, okay." And so they walked home. Ryuga had gotten his job, after all.

# Excerpt: Dear Daughter

Hi, everybody! Have a great Friday and don't forget to smile! :)

A little excerpt from Dear Daughter...

---

A month passed. Harley made a mental list of possible reasons why her father hadn't made contact.

1. He was busy; that was OK with Harley.
2. He still hadn't replaced his computer that the kid broke; this was also OK with Harley.
3. He had forgotten about her. Not OK.
4. He was dead or something. Also not OK.
5. He had decided she needed a life and that she really didn't want to talk to him. More than OK.

School was out. Summer was here. Harley was alone. And Pearl was...Pearl.

Nothing would change; nothing had changed since she was 9. Living practically alone with some 18-year-old, someone just barely into legal adulthood who didn't mind taking care of some latchkey kid for awhile, so long as said child didn't crash their social life.

Always being asked, "Where are your parents?" and accustomed to answering, "My daddy's on a business trip." Doji was always on a business trip. He had told her he was working to make Beyblade better. But he had lied, stolen a relic from Mount Hagane, and was working on taking over the world with the help of some ignorant fool who'd fallen prey to his evil plan. Daddy was a real-time nemesis.

---

Harley sprawled across the bed with a teddy bear and her phone, texting some random girl from school who was desperate enough to talk to Harley. She'd probably realize soon that Harley wasn't worth her time.

Beep. Beep. Beep. That annoying sound of a video chat request. Harley ignored it. She had already endured an excruciating video call with the annoying kid at least twice a day for the past week, and wasn't keen to repeat the experience. But the computer chose that moment to glitch itself into answering automatically and she looked up to come face to face with some random creep.

Harley yelled and so did the creep. Unfortunately her phone was on voice-activated texting and inexplicably translated to "Sausage marshmallow", sending to poor Amelia and probably confusing her.

The frozen boy staring back at her had some kind of tiara around his head, with flaming white hair emerging from his scalp. His eyes looked crazy and confused, and his teeth were sharpened to points.

No, Harley decided, creep did not begin to suffice.

"Who are you?" She demanded sullenly.

"I-I'm...who are you?"

"Hey, I asked first, buddy. And what are you doing in my dad's office with the lights off?"

"I was, uh, looking for something." And then his eyes sparked. "But it's none of YOUR business! You can't make me leave!"

"Listen, who are you, evil...thing?"

"My name is Ryuga", he answered importantly.

"Right. My father's evil accomplice. I must say, you fit the part quite nicely, being too creepy to pass for regular-creep-of-the-day."

"Hey, who are you calling creepy, kid!?"

"Oh, probably that person over here in the corner of my room who you can obviously see. YOU, duh!"

"Sarcasm isn't necessary. That was a rhetorical question."

"Yeah, yeah, yeah. Now get off dad's computer."



"I..." Ryuga straightened. "No."

"Yes."

"NO!"

"Well, what're you looking for, anyway?"

"I, uh, I'm not gonna tell ya. It's something really...creepy, and, uh, interesting. You wouldn't understand, you're too young."

"I'm 14."

"Oh." Ryuga's voice faltered as he realized she was the same age as she was.  
"Well...it's a secret."

"Whose secret?"

"Your dad's."

"Are you looking for his stash of chocolate?" Harley asked boredly. She'd learned the SECRET LOCATION from Annoying Person.

"WHAT? I, uh, no..." The guilt on his face was obvious.

"It's in the secret drawer in the back of the desk."

"I told you, I'm not looking for the chocolate!" Obvious reverence crept into the magic word. "I'm looking for, uh, for...oh, forget it."

He stooped to look in the drawer. "Thanks, kid", came his muffled voice from beneath the desk.

"Harley", she mumbled.

"Huh, what was that?"

"Nevermind."

Ryuga resurfaced with a candy bar clutched triumphantly in his hand, a bite already in his mouth. "So, where ya from, Harley?"

Great. Just like a guy. Say hi, he kills you. Give him chocolate, and he's your best friend.

"Tokyo."

"Oh, cool. The big city, huh?"

"Yeah. Whatever."

"From your voice, it's not all it's worked up to be."

"Nope."

"Join the dark side, we have interesting stuff."

"I prefer a slightly less criminal life, thank you."

"Why?"

"So I can sleep at night."

"I don't miss any sleep", he mumbled around the chocolate bar.

"That's because you're evil."

"It's fun. And nobody gets hurt. Yet."

"Yeah, YET. Let's see how you feel when my dad decides he's had enough of your skill and dumps you in the garbage with last week's spaghetti."

He laughed. "Last week's spaghetti. Ha."

"You'll sure be laughing when it's your roommate."

He paused for a second to swallow his candy. "You sure have a lot against guys who kinda want a little power, you know?"

"More like, WORLD DOMINATION."

"Same dif."

"Nuh-uh. A little power is like, governor of a city. What my dad's after, is world

domination."

"Oh."

"Yeah."

He was silent suddenly.

"I hear footsteps", he hissed.

"Okay. Hide. Nice meeting you."

Harley hung up.

# Of forests, Ryuga, and pineapple trees

Okay, back from vacay! I went to the city and I fell in love, not with a person but the spirit of the city itself...

Okay, no more drama queen. It's time to find out what happens when I hit a plot hole and end up in the blank vastness of my mind. Inspired by JuniperGentle.

Oc's: Me and Luis

Ic's: Ryuchi and Tsubachan

Guest stars: Advric and Tagon (Accredited to Luis)

---

Ryuga stood in the centre of the forest with light streaming in all around. He...

Ow, ow. Brain hurt. I hit a plot hole, right there. I had no idea what I was doing.

All these thoughts were going through my head. Mj asking for watermelon. Ryuga in the forest. Tsubasa's van, and whether it was white or grey or blue...

Even that elephant from Daniel X. I had absolutely no idea what to write in this space. It was Monday. I had no more coffee. I missed the city and there was nothing else to do.

Okay, getting thoughts straightened out. Mj could have her watermelon. Ryuga...didn't know what to do with him just yet. Tsubasa's van could be blue. He likes blue.

And that elephant thing can go away now.

Still no idea what to do with Ryuga, a boat maybe? No, I'm sick of boats. I don't like boats any more.

I walked into the kitchen and found Luis at my table, drinking that tea I made for him, he still hadn't finished it. Luis, unlike Mj who represents me and Ryuga, who's back in the beyblade universe, is most undoubtedly real.

Luis told me I should use his villain characters to add light to the story. So I shut

my eyes and began again.

Suddenly he heard the sound of...

Hooves? Robots? Swords? I don't know. Hooves, let's stick with that.

Hooves. They were clomping towards him, stomping insistently against the cold ground. No, insistently isn't the right word. Menacingly. Yes, there it is.

A rider leapt off the horse as it skidded to a stop in front of him. The man was about his age, clothed in black from head to toe. A violet cape swirled around him, reaching to his ankles.

No, not cape. Cloak.

Whoawhoawhoawhoawhoa. Move that tree, he's about to bump into it. The tree disappeared and I sagged back into the desk chair, angry at myself for allowing that weird pineapple tree to creep into my thoughts again.

There are no pineapple trees on the Black Pearl. Wait, what? I said no more boats. Too many pirate videos in the past week.

The man drew his sword in a challenging manner and glared at Ryuga. "How dare you entre into these woods?" No, not entre. Not centre. ENTER. ENTER. HOW DARE YOU ENTER...

Forgot the quotes. "HOW DARE YOU ENTER INTO THESE WOODS!?"

"I go where I want."

Agh. A wild pineapple tree has suddenly appeared. Advric bumped into it with a resounding thump and dissolved into thin air. The horse whinnied plaintively at Ryuga.

"Girl, get your act together!"

I know, Ryuga, I know. Somewhere in the Beyblade world a pineapple just appeared a foot away from you and you stepped on it...again. And probably you just bumped into a horse. I'm sorry.

But I can't think of anything right now.

"You can't put pineapple trees in the middle of a Canadian forest, and the poor villain is gone now. Think, think."

So I materialized Tagon in front of the pineapple tree.

"I say! Who put a pineapple tree in the centre of the forest like some maniac? I am in an authoress's mind..."

Tagon was unaccustomed to being in the mind of a female. Luis was his host mind and trust me, our minds are quite different.

Tagon, you're not supposed to say I SAY like some kind of old man.

I shoved the pineapple tree into the back of my mind as Tagon charged Ryuga, who sidestepped him neatly.

"BOOYAKASHAAAAA!"

No, no! Ninja Turtles gets into my brain at the worst of times. It hurts.

"A giant turtle? What sorcery is this!?" Luis is evidently more skilled at keeping his characters neatly separated than I am. Poor Advric, whom I borrow quite a lot, has been subject to being penned in a horse corral with Mikey for 6 hours.

The horse turned into my Robot Unicorn Attack avatar, Kyuzo. Just so we're clear I don't own TMNT, Peanut butter, Old McDonald had a farm, Who stole the cookie from the cookie jar, New York, Pokémon, Baseball, Basketball, Volleyball, Tennis, Any sport in general, the USA, Steak, The Bus, Hawkeye (avengers), Sewers, Syringes, Earsplitting shrieks, Pizza, Coffee, Donuts, HDTVs, Jello, Mr. Gatti's, Nasty dead fishes, "Aw Pickles", Turtle Ice Cream, Skittles, Boullion, Trampolines, Cough drops, Duck Tape, The Coo-Coo Sign, Superheroes, Baguettes, the recipe for cheeseburgers, spoons, iPods, Remote Controls, The Internet, Spy Kids 4, BATMAN, English Accents, Spiderman, Mario Kart, Electro, Peter Parker, Cinnamon Rolls, Sumo Wrestlers, Hypothesises, Dark Side, Cliffs, Plot Bunnies, Blackberry Generation 4, Facepalming, How do you Spell FBI, FBI, TV, CSI, IBC, CNN, Waffles, ROFL, 911, PBS, 7-11s, soda, caffeine, Taylor Swift, I Knew You Were Trouble, Drama queens, Chicken with its head cut off, Jingle Bells, the Wicked Witch of the West, The West, Witches, Hammocks, That Stinging Alcohol Stuff, Phineas and Ferb, Looney Tunes Show, Simply Faboo, Cars, Gas stations, Running on Empty, Cocoa Puffs, Hockey gear, Sharpies, Spaghetti, Chopsticks, Dude, Foreign Languages, Scary Zombie Movies, Rollerskates, Mariah Carey, Goofballs, Deodorant, Dream Lover, Flint Lockwood, the FLDSMDFR, Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs, VCR

players, Sweet Caroline, Vegetarians, Fried Chicken, Spongebob, Stepmoms, Mother's Day, Battle armor, Florists, Kimchi, Can openers, I Quit, Erwin Schroedinger, Schroedinger's cat, quantum physics (loathsome), Ham Sandwiches, Food, Gross food, Hats in general, Fedoras, Fuchsia, Squirrels, DON'T YOU DARE, baldness, horse corrals, Robot Unicorn Attack, or anything from beyblade.

Phew, that disclaimer is a mouthful.

Oh, look, peanut butter. Right there on that pineapple tree. It wouldn't stay out of my brain. Kyuzo snorted and set the tree on fire with his flaming hooves. Too bad it's a supernatural tree. Even the amazing Kyuzo couldn't eliminate that tree from my mind. Apparently not even the Hamburger Helper hand, which came creeping out of the forest with a bag of raw meatloaf. Another thing or two that I don't own.

"Get me out of this story. STOP THINKING ABOUT ME. Why can't I just sneeze like everyone else instead of getting attacked by guys with swords!?"

Reluctantly I returned Ryuga. He really is one of my best IC's.

I was jerked out of my crazy thoughts by Tsubasa. Thank goodness for Tsubasa. I brought him back with me when I ended Letters to the Crew, and he's saved me from insanity about a million times since then.

"Are you okay?"

"I'm going insane. I can't get the story straight."

"is it that pineapple tree again?"

"Yes, it won't go away."

"I got you some coffee from the supermarket."

Really, such a nice guy.

The coffee eliminated the thought of that hamburger helper hand with his raw meatloaf, thankfully, but I think the pineapple tree is imprinted on my mind forever. It lives in the forest now with Kyuzo. Tagon finally went back to Luis's mind. Ryuga will probably kill me if I write about him again.

Oh, speaking of which, there he is with his car keys between the breakdancing hippo and the giant chocolate bar. I guess he won't be getting out of my head

anytime soon.



# Tsubasa doesn't know any good pool games

Just another regular day...

This was inspired by me and my little brothers playing a game in the pool yesterday. Enjoy!

Ics: Tsubasa (Of course)

Ocs: Mj, Matt, and Mikey

Guest appearances: Tetsuya! Crabby!

---

There had never been a day so hot as this one, so overladen with air of such a humidity that you could almost feel it draping around your shoulders. Luckily Mj's family had a swimming pool.

Tsubasa opted to sit by the side of it as usual, while Mj followed her little brothers to the water's edge, clothed in a t-shirt, shorts and life jacket. (None of them knew how to properly swim and so they always used for the life jackets, to make themselves feel floaty.)

"I'm borrrred...I'm borrrrrred..." Mikey floated on his back and stared at the sky.

"You're in the water. I thought water was entertainment for little children." Mikey glared at Tsubasa. "I mean...8 year olds."

"Do you know any good water games, Tsubasa?"

"No. I don't like water."

"Heh. Tell that to the fish."

"There's Marco Polo", suggested Matt.

"I'm tired of that game. Mj always wins."

"You can't really WIN, Mikey. It's not that kind of game."

"You've seen her make grape juice from lemons before. Forget that, she could make grape juice from a turkey", commented Tsubasa. "It's nothing for her to win a game that you can't win."

"You're so nice. Look, I'm a pirate!" Mj crouched low in the water and scuttled around.

"Mahahaha. You look more like Tetsuya-san."

"Crabbyyyyyy..."

"Don't do that, it's creepy."

"I know!" Matt was struck with a brilliant idea. "We can play pirates. The biggest person is the ship, I'll be the boat, and Mikey can be the little man. The little man has to capture the boat and then they both have to capture the ship."

"I'm not little!"

"Come get me, little man." Matt swam around the swimming pool while Tsubasa watched with mild boredom. Mikey desperately paddled after him with his short little arms and legs until he gave up, lying on his back like a fluorescent orange beetle. Matt swam over to within 5 inches of Mikey and let him get on his back.

"Okay, now GET THE SHIP!" Matt swam furiously towards his older sister, who was doing outdated dance moves underwater. She shrieked when she saw them heading her way. "CRABBYYY!" Then she headed for the opposite shore.

"Ow! HEY! No splashing, sister!" Tsubasa was indignant as he was hit by wave after wave of Mj's violent assault on sanity.

"I ain't your sister. And they ain't splashing. They're guns." Mj was from Texas and tended to take on a Southern accent when she was sassing people.

"Well quit aiming at me."

"Get a life, Tsubachan." Mj aimed her splashes at her little brothers, neglecting to avoid Tsubasa in the process. Then she ducked under the water and out of sight; it remained unbeknownst to the boys how she could disappear in crystal clear swimming pool water.

Her life jacket floated ominously to the surface but a moment later. She was

nowhere in sight.

Finally Mj appeared a few feet from the life jacket, floundering helplessly in the 7 foot deep water.

"Honestly? You can conjure pineapple trees from nowhere, but you can't swim?"

"Gablugh." Mj made a sort of gurgling sound and caught the floatie in her fingers. "Phew, almost drowned there."

She ducked beneath the water again, resurfacing just behind Matt the Boat.

"CRABBY!"

"HAAGH! DON'T DO THAT!"

Mikey fell off of Matt. Matt fell beneath the water. Tsubasa fell off the deck chair. Mj laughed.

"Did somebody call me, crabs?"

"Oh no." Mj whirled.

"Tetsuya, buddy! How great to see you!" Her smile was as fake as a Santa Claus.

"Oh, thank you crabs."

"Now...WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?" The fury was lost on poor Tetsuya.

"I came because someone said crab, crab."

"Oh...care to leave?"

"NO, I don't, I'll just stay here."

"Okay. Fine." Mj glared at the greasy haired crab.

At that moment she was assaulted from behind. "GET THE SHIIIPP!"

She floundered out from under her giggling brothers and to the centre of the pool. "Gentlemen, you will always remember this as the day that you almost caught Jack Spar - OUGH!" She fell beneath the water comically.

"GAH! Tsubasa! YOU DIDN'T TELL ME THERE WAS WATER THERE!"

"It's a swimming pool, pinchy. You should expect water."

"Oh thank you sir. Now please vacation the promises."

"I think you mean -"

"Oh Tetsuya, please go find a nice little crab to save or eat or play with or something. I think I hear a crab in distress."

"OH DEAR CRAB I WILL SAVE YOU!" Tetsuya was finally gone. Mj the ship was sunk by Tsubasa being pulled into the water, courtesy of Matt. And they all came into the house wet and were scolded by her mother.

# Of 7 maniacs left home alone

Well, it's once again the middle of the week.

Meh, nothing else to say. Have fun.

Ic's: Tsubasa, Ryuga, Kyouya

Oc's: Mj and Luis

Special guests: Tobio Ooike and Advric...muahahaha. Advric is attributed to poor Luis, who is subject to my Oc-stealing more often than is necessary.

Last Day is attributed to Miika Mettinen.

---

"C. No, **C.** No, Kyouya, I said PRESS C..."

Horrible noises were coming from the living room. Sounds like dying cats - a cliché used far too often in Mj's house - perforated by her insistent yells of "C! KYOUIA! PRESS THE C KEY!"

For some reason, Kyouya had wanted to learn to play on the piano. Probably to show up Gingka, as usual. And so far he'd hit every key except for middle C. Forget about the first verse of "twinkle twinkle little star." At this rate it would take him a week to get to "little".

"MJ!"

The 16-year-old girl turned her head, barely able to hear Tobio over Kyouya's well-named caterwaul.

"GET HIM OFF THAT PIANO!"

Kyouya responded to none of Mj and Tobio's protests, and in the end they had to push him off the gingham-covered bench and onto the hardwood floor.

"Kyouya, please don't become inseparable from the piano. Because if you do, then you and your lovely pet will be removed to the farthest reaches of humanity for the sake of all things living."

"What?"

"GET OFF THE PIANO."

"Oh, okay. I couldn't hear you. My ears are ringing."

"No surprise there." With a sigh, Tobio sank into a nearby chair and Mj commandeered the piano. The strains of Miika Mettinen's LAST DAY rang slowly across the walls of the old house. Masamune straggled into the room and sank onto the floor with a groan.

Everyone was bored. The week had gone from a heinous crawl of tangible humidity to a loathsome pouring of non-stop rain. The backyard was flooded, as was the goat pen. Tsubasa had driven to Mj's house that morning to drop off some book she wanted, and with him had been Masamune who was going to school, Tobio who was going to the bey park, Kyouya who like to ride in cars, and Ryuga, who had been dragged along because Mj needed to fuss at him for stealing stuff out of her fridge.

But none of them had gotten far. In the 10 minutes and 26 seconds that the 4 of them were in the house, the tires sunk halfway into the mud and wouldn't even spin against the gummed calichi. It happened on rural driveways in the town of the middle of nowhere.

Luis had met the same fate. On the way to her house to pick up his dog, he and his villain Advric had been caught in the mud like crabs in a crab trap. None of them would be going anywhere, perhaps for the next few days. Mj's mum and siblings were in town, as was her dad. They'd made arrangements to stay with her grandmother that night.

So it was that the 7 worst maniacs in history were locked in a house too small and old to withstand their ravings.

"Kyouya, let's play hide and seek", Masamune suggested.

"You've got to be kidding me."

"Oh, come on, TateKyo", Mj whined. "We're all bored."

"That game is for little kids and losers."

"We can play big kid hide and seek: whoever is counting has to do 6 algebra problems or count from -1 to  $26\frac{1}{2}$  by thirds..."

"Is that even possible?"

"And whoever is found can save themselves by spelling something like triskadekaphobia (a/n: I might not even have spelled that one right) and get another chance to hide."

"Sounds good to me." Tobio was in.

"Oh, come on, Kyo-yo, it'll be fun."

"Fine."

"OH YES! Yes yes yes yes!" Mj whooped.

"Yes, what?" Tsubasa had entered the room.

"Kyo-yo said he'll play hide and seek with us. Will you play?" For a 16 year old, she can be immature at times.

"I...don't know."

"Oh, cuz you'll lose."

"What? You don't LOSE at hide and seek."

"Well, I've won before..." This conjured the image out of Tsubasa's memory of that day she'd been claimed hide and seek queen when she was younger, standing on top of the washing machine.

"Okay, fine. But only to beat you."

"I bet Luis will play."

"Go get him, the more the better", Masamune piped up.

"Luis! LOUIIEEE!"

Luis appeared at the doorway. "I'll be deaf before my time", he murmured.

"Will you play hide and seek with us?"

"Sure, whatever."

"Will Advric play? Cuz if Advric plays, Ryuga's gonna have to play."

"Play what? I do not PLAY. I am the RULER of the UNIVERSE." Advric's pouty voice hailed from the little boys' bedroom.

"Ryuga's playing."

"WHAT! I SHALL BEAT THAT GOOD FOR NOTHING BOY..."

"Okay, good. RYUGA!"

"WHAT!" Ryuga yelled from upstairs. Mj was too happy to wonder what he was doing in her room.

"WILL YOU PLAY WITH US!"

"NO!"

"ADVRIC IS PLAYING!"

"YES!" Ryuga stormed down the stairs. Advric realised he'd been double crossed and began to protest, but Mj yelled "NOT IT!"

And so the chaos began.

Advric lost at the not it contest. "Okay, Advric. You can either do about 6 algebra problems or count from negative one to 26 and a half by thirds."

"I can't do algebra."

"Okay, you can count..."

"Show me the problem on paper?"

" (-1) to (26 1/2) by 1/3s."

"Much better. Wait, is that even possi -"

"GO!"

Everyone sprinted for the nearest closet.



About an hour later, Advric gave up on the counting and began to search around the house.

---

"I just hope Mj is okay at home with all those crazy kids running around the house."

"Don't worry, Mom", Matt assured her. "Mj may be crazy, but she knows how to be responsible."

"Besides, Tsubachan is there with her."

"Oh, he is? That makes me feel much better."

"Don't worry, honey", her husband said. "I'm sure they're fine..."

---

"OWWW! OWEOWOWOWOWOW! I THINK YOU BROKE MY LEG!" Tsubasa was howling in a closet that Advric had slammed open too hard. Why was it that the closet opened towards the inside?

"Sorry, good sir. But MUAHAHAA, I am one step closer to taking over THE WORLD!"

"That makes no sense." Tsubasa limped up and out of the room. Luckily his leg wasn't broken, only bruised. He would live.

"Wait! I believe you are required to spell a difficult word!"

"You broke my leg. I think that's recompense enough."

"Spell...your name. Even I the great and powerful cannot do that challenging task."

"Ok. T, s, u, b, a, s, a."

"I don't think it has an a, or a k..."

"That wasn't part of the spelling."

"I thought it would be spelled more like, SOOBAWSUH."

"I think I would know how to spell my own name."

"Okay. I shall go take over the rest of the broken legged imbeciles who can't spell their names."

Tsubasa executed a perfect facepalm. The kind that knocks you out cold.

---

"There's been a disturbance in the facepalm universe", murmured DaXian as he sat at the Bei Lin school.

---

"Hello, Louisa", sneered Advric.

"Do not challenge me, fiend. I am your creator. You will listen to me."

"The student has become the master."

"You do not deserve to be my student, for you have disgraced the ways of peace."

"Well, you -"

"WILL YOU JUST QUIT IT!"

Tsubasa was apparently awake.

"I found you, sir."

"What's the hard word I have to spell?"

"Uhh...Uhhhhhh...Snake. You have to spell snake."

Snake was the biggest word that Advric knew how to spell.

"Ok. S, n, a, k, e."

"Why do people keep winning!?"

Luis went to the living room to have a facepalming contest with Tsubasa.

---

DaXian flinched. It was probably those people out at the old house in the middle of nowhere.

"Who's causing the disturbance?" MeiMei asked.

"It's that guy...SOOBAWSUH..."

---

Advric scoured the kitchen hastily. So hastily that he nearly forgot to look underneath the table. There was Masamune.

"Ahh! The cow's offspring!"

"Just because my name has "moo" in it doesn't mean I'm descended from a cow."

"Oh, please. Only a mother cow could love that face."

"You would know."

"Spell...uhm..wardrobe."

"W, a, r, d, r, o, b, e." Then Advric had to go get a dictionary to see if it was spelled right.

"Okay, okay, you get to go slap yourself with the other maniacs."

---

DaXian cried out. "OW!"

"What's wrong with him?" whispered Zhou Xing.

"He has this disease where he feels it every time someone correctly facepalms."

"Mei mei, get me an ice pack..." moaned DaXian.

---

Advric found Kyouya and Tobio fighting over the space beneath the bed.

"Found you, LOSERS."

"Oh, hello. BECAUSE OF THIS JERK, WE DIDN'T EVEN GET TO HIDE!"

"It wasn't my fault!"

"Easy. Tobio, you have to spell quarantine."

Advric thought he sounded smart. He'd memorized the letters from the dictionary.

Tobio was better at spelling than he looked.

"Okay, Kyouya, you have to spell...dog."

"d, 9, q."

"Wrong!"

"Just kidding. D, o, g."

"Aw, man. Go slap yourselves, cat and sheep."

"GOAT!"

"Okay, goat."

---

DaXian moaned in pain. Chi Yun, Mei mei, and Zhou Xing were huddled around him.

"Those jerks at that crazy girl's house need to quit slapping themselves quite so hard."

The DaXian fainted.

---

Mj was in the space between the TV and the wall upstairs.

Advric found himself being shot with a watergun when she jumped out. "HIYAA! Luis has taught me the lessons of water gun mastery!"

"He taught me more!"

"DIE, FIEND!"

Advric fake died.

"Great. Now spell eighty-seven."

"8, 7."

"HOW ARE YOU GUYS SO GOOD AT THIS!?"

Mj traversed downstairs. "'Ey, quit slappin' yourselves. DaXian's probably having a heart attack."

---

DaXian woke up.

"Thank goodness for the mercy of that insane child..."

---

Finally remained Ryuga. Advric looked all over and found him finally, in the back of Mj's clothes closet.

"Does the smallish girl know you're here?"

"Nope."

"Then nobody shall hear you scream." Advric picked up a handy foam sword that Mj had lying around her room.

Ryuga defeated him using only a bedspread and the desk chair.

"Now spell...spell."

"s, p, e, l, l."

"WHAT!?"

Ryuga dragged the bedsheet-cocooned Advric down the stairs.

"Hey, guys, all of us won. What do we do now?"

Mj grinned from ear to ear. "Now Advric has to count again!"

# Of 7 maniacs left home alone part 2

Good morning, people!

I'd like to say to all of you: DON'T DRINK LIQUIDS WHILE READING MY STORIES! For that matter, no solids either :) This is a lesson from poor dear nellabean, who spat coffee all over her keyboard, and another lady who spat milk on her sister. Hence the spitting milk thing with Ryuga and Ryuto in Prototype 1.

SO finish your cereal before reading! ;)

ICs: Same as last chapter, OCs and Guests too! Once again Advric goes to Luis!

---

Mj had got sick that day.

It may have been because of the tramping in the rain she'd so unwisely undertook that day, and only Tsubasa knew it was because she was crying for her friend. It may have been because of keeping a secret for said friend, for almost a month now, unable to tell anybody.

Or maybe she caught the cold from Masamune, who'd been sick a week ago.

But in any case she was bedridden. That was bad. Tsubasa was asleep on the couch, because he and Luis were tired out from tying Advric up in the attic. Masamune was hiding somewhere. Kyouya was off in one of his "kitty moods".

So this left only Ryuga. And somebody had to cook dinner. The grownups still weren't home because of the horrible weather.

Ryuga stared at the foreign kitchen utensils, completely lost. Was that a spork? Or a fork? Or a spoon? (In truth, it was a spaghetti spoon.)

"Oh, why thank you for that answer."

Good gravy, I just gave him the answer. Now it won't be insane enough.

"The less insanity you put in here, the better."

Just get on with the cooking, Ryuga.

Ryuga rummaged through the cabinets, searching for an ingredient he recognized. Mj's pantry and fridge were full to the bursting. Ryuga searched around and finally found a large casserole dish; maybe he could mix something up in there.

"Oh, this is a casserole dish? Is that what it's called? How do you spell that?"

Ryuga, I'm the narrator. This is not Word Girl. You're not supposed to talk to me.

Just then Advric walked in the kitchen. "Ahh! So, you're cooking, are you? Well I'll bet I can cook better than you."

"Did you have to bring him here?"

Payback time for not following the rules of a story. Now get back to work, the OC's are hungry.

Ryuga turned his back on poor Advric and started to fill the casserole dish. He didn't bother to look for a recipe; chicken casserole should be good.

Chicken...where was the chicken? He looked in the cabinets. Ryuga, silly boy, chicken has to be refrigerated. So he looked in the refrigerator because I gave him the answers AGAIN. It wasn't there.

Finally he got the sense to look in the big commercial freezer that Mj's parents kept in the garage. He grabbed the first pink meat he could find and put it in the pan. He found Advric frying marshmallows and corn flakes in a pot on top of the stove.

"I already started."

"Cheater."

Ryuga began to put chicken in the casserole dish. Shouldn't you cook the chicken first, Ryuga?

"I thought you weren't going to give me the answers any more."

Well I'd rather you didn't make the Oc's too sick. Then there'd be no next chapter.

So Ryuga took out the chicken and put it in the pan with Advric's marshmallows while he wasn't looking.

When the chicken looked really...really, I mean REALLY, like burnt really cooked on the outside, Ryuga put it in the pan. Some of the marshmallows stuck, but it would hopefully bring out the flavour.

"Ah, so you are making CHICKEN PIE. Well, I am making Rice Crispys."

"You don't make it with corn flakes, dummy."

"Well we have no rice."

"I think you're supposed to put the cereal in AFTER you melt the marshmallows."

"Hey, don't look at me. Thanks to YOU it will now be chicken-flavoured as well."

Sounds delicious, guys.

Ryuga sprinkled some bread on top of the chicken...without crumbling it first...and then he put ketchup and a little bit of mustard. Because if you put ketchup you had to put mustard too. And pickles, and why not chilli?

Then he popped it in the oven and burned Advric on the leg. "Oh, by the way, how did you even get out of the attic?"

"Tsubasa left his knife on the floor."

"Tsubasa was carrying a knife around?"

"It's for when a wild dinner appears."

Don't you dare quote Pokémon. You're being unfaithful to your own anime, Advric.

Advric put grapes into the rice crispys because Mj's grandmother always put dried cranberries. He figure that dried cranberries were the same as raisins, and raisins were grapes, so grapes would work too. There were no m and m's. Or peanuts. And the marshmallows looked awfully thin. So he added eggs to make it thicker and cooked it until it hardened to the pot and burnt all around.

Perhaps frosting would make it better. There was a whole jar of it in the pantry. (little did he know it was shortening...)

"Hey, Advric, the authoress says that's shortening."



"Oh. Ew. Well, that's what you make frosting from anyway, yes? So I shall just put some of this and some of THIS." So saying, he added 3 cups of sugar and a bottle of vanilla; unable to stir it in, he simply put the lid on the pot and decided it looked great.

"I am quite sure mine shall taste better than yours."

Luis stumbled into the kitchen, searching for something to eat. On smelling Ryuga's creation, he opted for a tomato and left the dining room for the rest of the night.

Tsubasa was easier to persuade into a taste test. He wondered what that queer flavour was in Ryuga's dish; at the mention of ketchup with bread he decided Advric's dessert was better left untasted.

Kyouya didn't even need to be asked. He came back from his kitty mood starving from the lack of raw flesh; pretty soon all of Ryuga's casserole was gone. Into the trash.

Poor Advric was left with his burnt and hardened grape shortening food which could not be cut. So he ate the shortening off the top. Even the dog refused to touch the black rock bried beneath, though infused with chicken and grapes. That pot would never be used again.

## Excerpt: Prototype 1 (interlude 2)

Hey, it's Friday! Which means tomorrow's Saturday! It also means...it's excerpt day!

I know, I know, you got enough of this last week. But I'm sticking to the schedule, and too busy to write another chapter right now...so do enjoy!

And do check out Prototype 1 if you haven't got the chance to yet.

---

Ryuto knelt beside the river. He'd agreed to help Toby catch fish for dinner.

Tsubasa was setting up the tents and Brady and Kyouya were out getting firewood. Ryuto concentrated on the clear water in front of him and waited for the shadow that meant a fish was near.

All of a sudden a flash of silver darted through the air. Ryuto's hand shot out and he pulled in a nicely sized trout.

"Here, hold this." He shoved the fish at Toby, who eagerly grabbed hold of it. Ryuto ran back to camp because he forgot his knife.

The fish flapped insistently in Toby's hands "Hey, hold still, fish." The fish answered with a skillful slap of its tail, and hit Toby square in the face.

"OW!" Startled, Toby dropped the trout as Ryuto returned.

He came in on a most unusual sight. Toby, now sporting a red fish-shaped slap mark on his cheek, was juggling the trout like a ball.

"What on earth are you doing, Toby?"

"I'm, uh, catching a fish- -"

He was cut off as the fish leapt towards him, and with a startled cry, he toppled off the bank. Ryuto ran to shore to help him up.

---

Kyouya could see a nice sized log a little further off the path. He went to pick it up

and was surprised as the log yanked back, hard, nearly toppling him over.

"GAAH! HAUNTED LOG!" Then he saw that it was only Brady, pulling the wood away from him.

"Hey, ease off. I found the log first."

"Nuh-uh."

"GIVE IT."

"YOU GIVE IT!"

"You guys", came Tsubasa's faraway voice, "It's gonna be burnt up anyway. It's only wood, stop fighting over it."

Brady scowled and surrendered the log.

A little further down the path, out of Tsubasa's hearing range (supposedly), rested a tantalizingly large piece of wood. Instantly they both reached for it.

"GIVE IT", Kyouya snarled.

"Why should I give it to you? You're not very nice."

"PLEASE give it."

"No way."

"GIVE IT TO ME!"

"Well, first you have to beat me in an arm wrestle!"

"WHAT!? IS THAT A CHALLENGE!?"

"YES!"

About 200 yards away, Tsubasa snorted.

Kyouya and Brady dropped their wood. "Loser has to carry all the firewood. AND sleep on the ground."

"Deal."

For the next 10 minutes, they strained to bring each other down.

"You're not as strong as I thought."

Kyouya snorted. "I'm going easy on you." Lies.

"I'm bringing you down..."

"...In your dreams, you pathetic GIRL."

"GAH. Let's see who's the REAL girl!"

"YOU are actually a girl!"

"No, YOU'RE a girl!"

"NUH-UH!"

Taking advantage of this distraction, Brady pushed Kyouya's arm down to the ground. "I WON!"

"WHAT!? NO! YOU MUST'VE CHEATED OR SOMETHING! I DEMAND A REMATCH!"

"No way, kitty boy! I won fair and square, and I'd beat you again, easily!"

"IS THAT A CHALLENGE!?"

"You're carrying the wood, kitty."

"Grrrr..." Kyouya frustratedly stooped to pick up the wood and trudged sulkily down the footpath after Brady.

---

Tsubasa looked up from bending a tent pole to see Ryuto returning with a stick of skewered fish slung over his shoulder.

"Great job, you guys! That should be enough for everybody", he said, scrutinizing the pole thoughtfully.

"Yeah, well, I did most of the fishing. Toby here decided to go for a swim and got beaten by a 2-pound trout", answered Ryuto with a straight face.

"That would explain the fish-shaped slap mark."

"Yeah, that's very funny, guys." A dripping wet Toby sludged sulkily after Ryuto, glaring at his soaked shoes.

"I'm going into the bushes to change my clothes."

"Okay, but go to the other side of the clearing. Kyouya and Brady will be coming back the other way."

Toby shot his brother a loathsome glare and squelched into the trees.

A few minutes later, Brady marched into camp, looking extremely proud of herself.

"Where's all the wood?"

"Kyouya's carrying it."

"Why?"

"Don't ask", Tsubasa hastily advised. Ryuto gave him a strange look, but said no more. A few more minutes passed and a large pile of wood came walking into the clearing.

"Oh, hello, Kyouya", said Ryuto. Again with the straight face.

"Yeah, whatever", came Kyouya's muffled voice from behind the wood, which he dumped haughtily in the middle of the camp. After a look around, he inquired, "Where's Toby?"

"He went to change out of his bathing suit", Ryuto answered seriously.

"Ew. Don't put that picture in my mind."

"I was not wearing a bathing suit", Toby snapped through gritted teeth, emerging from the forest grumpily.

"Ew. Like I said, don't."

Toby scowled at Ryuto, who pretended to be oblivious. Brady shook her head in a mock-disapproving manner. Tsubasa sighed. "Just quit fighting and build the fire."

"Oh, who made you Mr. Boss?" Demanded Kyouya.

"Well, I'm the only one mature enough to shut my mouth and get to work, and I'm the only one who decided he'd rather NOT be up all night in the freezing rain, so I thought you could use a little help there, Kyouya."

Kyouya glared. "It's not raining, dummy." An ice-cold drop fell on his head.

"It is now."

"Wait-How did you..."

"Nevermind." Tsubasa smiled.

"And you're sleeping on the ground tonight, kitty-cat." Brady smirked and tweaked his ear.

"HEY! CUT THAT OUT!"

"Guys, we'd better build the fire and eat before we're all soaked to the bone"- here Ryuto threw a compensating look at Toby -"Again..."

Once more pretending to be oblivious to Toby's scowl, he knelt by the pile of wood and pretended to be busy.

The raindrops fell heavier by the second around the small group as Ryuto struggled to light the fire.

"Let's get the fish cooked before it's too wet", suggested Toby, trying to be helpful now.

Ryuto grimaced. "I'm afraid it's too late for that now."

"NOOO! WE HAVE TO EAT SOMETHING!"

"Didn't anybody bring anything besides yesterday's lunch?...really? Nobody brought ANYTHING? WE FLEW ALL NIGHT IN A HELICOPTER AND NOBODY BROUGHT ANY MORE FOOD!?"

Tsubasa watched as the others shook their heads.

"We'll have to eat them raw", announced Brady, grabbing a fish and walking into her tent.

The others surveyed the fish in silence, getting wetter by the second, until Kyouya said, "...Ew."

"Heh. And that's coming from the kitty boy."

"You're sleeping outside, kitty", Brady called from inside her tent. Kyouya glared at the wall of waterproof fabric before stomping off under a tree.

Toby, Ryuto and Tsubasa walked into the small 1-person tents set up around the clearing; since Brady had taken control of the 2-person tent, they were all stuck with tiny cramped ones. Long-legged boys had to endure so many worse things than short girls.

---

Late that night, a drenched Kyouya walked back to camp. In the dark, fish bones glistened white against the gray drizzle, right outside Brady's tent. Ew. She'd actually eaten that raw fish. Disgusting.

And they said boys were the gross ones...

From inside Toby's tent came a chomping sound; evidently he'd tried the fish too. Kyouya mumbled a complaint to the cloudy sky and curled up in the middle of the clearing, anticipating a sleepless night.

---

Something fun I thought I'd do, you get a preview of what is to come sometime next week if my crazy mind/schedule permits...

Mj and Tsubasa are sent to London to live with her grandmother for a week or a month or an undetermined period of time. The problem is, Mj's grandmother doesn't know that Tsubasa exists! So the duo has to keep Tsubasa's existence a secret at risk of grandmotherly rage...

Muahahahaha.

# Important news

Ok everyone, this isn't an update. It's a notice.

No, I'm not discontinuing. No, Tsubasa isn't dead. Yes, Masamune and Ryuga are in the emergency room, which is a story for another time.

What happened was, if you remember, and if you're the kind of person who read Friday's excerpt anyway, Tsubasa and Mj were supposed to go to England.

But they never did. And they won't be.

Because of the weather, all the flights to London were cancelled. All the flights to anywhere. And you can't drive to England from SouthWest USA. SO they decided not to go. Tsubasa wasn't supposed to go, and Mj didn't want to.

Something about a closet under the stairs that need cleaning, and the horrid mention of photo albums is quite a deterrent.

I know you don't understand what I'm trying to say here. Let's just say that right now, I need to get to the emergency room with Tsubasa. Mj's there already and she'd freaking out.

So have fun, I guess.

Oh, also. Mj says on her profile there will be a poll up shortly about which was your favourite line, to make up for not posting a new chapter.

So, bye now,

Luis



# What happened yesterday?

Hi there. My name is Zayne, and I'll be taking over Smiling through a Monday for today. Even though we weren't necessarily smiling yesterday, it's funny when you look back on it.

I guess Luis told you all about how Masamune and Ryuga were in the ER yesterday. I guess he told you how we're all tired now, and how Mj freaked out until he and Tsubasa came out to calm her down before she woke up the coma patients.

She's still asleep now. We're lucky she doesn't snore.

So this is the story of how Masamune and Ryuga ended up in the ER at the same time.

---

You shouldn't bring Ryuga to a restaurant. That's what I told them all, even if it is his birthday. He has no business in a public place like that, without straitjackets handy. So they brought Luis with them.

Do you want to come? They said.

I said no. If anyone was going to be associated with that dragon maniac causing a disaster, it wasn't going to be me.

Oh, it'll be fun, they said. But you know what happens when they say that. It never is.

So I was left at home with Masamune. Another mistake. We all make mistakes; it's just that when our group gets together, we make more than average. We're better at filling police quotas than anyone else that I know.

So there they went with Ryuga. That's the second half of this story. Since I wasn't there, Luis will come to that in a bit.

Masamune wanted to play on the piano, naturally; ever since Mj and the crisis with Kyouya, she's not let a one of us on that thing. But since she was gone, he said what she didn't know wouldn't hurt her.

I said it was a bad idea. I told him all along. But he didn't listen. That piano

banged on for the rest of the afternoon, until I wanted to lay down and die. He's nowhere near as good as the people who actually know how to play piano. Forget that, he's nowhere near as good as Kyouya.

It's not a compliment.

I could hear all the birds flying away in the direction of the city, squawking with pain as their little brains blew up.

Masamune finally got tired of that piano and went into the kitchen to get a drink of water. Most of the glasses were shattered, thanks to his raucous playing. He managed to find one that could be drunk from, one of the plastic ones with Mickey Mouse on it. I went into the kitchen a minute later; it was about dinner time by now, and I wondered where Ryuga and the others could possibly be. They'd only left before lunch.

Well I guess I came up on Masamune a bit too fast. He threw his water glass into the air and we found out why Matt shouldn't leave his library books on the counter. The kitchen floor was covered in the shards of glass that fell out of the cabinets, the counter was covered with water. Masamune was yelling at me for scaring him.

I told him how Mj's mother would likely punish him for getting all the glass in the house shattered at one time, and how Mj would punish him for getting his sticky little fingers on her piano. Jelly beans will do that.

"First Mj's mum is going to string you up by your toenails and smack you with a rolled up newspaper, and then she'll throw you in a soup pot and pour you down the sewer. Then Mj will find you in the sewer and feed you to the alligator that lives down there, who she'll feed to a hippo, who will then grow wings from her authoress power and fly into the sun and burn up. Then she'll throw the ashes in a swamp and watch them sink."

I shouldn't've told him that. He said he was going away to Africa forever. The only thing that stopped him was the sliding glass door in the kitchen; he has the brain of a hummingbird and he forgot what glass was. He ended up unconscious with an ostrich egg-sized lump on his head. So I drove him to the ER, about the same time that Tsubasa went to pick up Luis, who'll tell you the other side of the story now.

---

Hi, this is Luis...the guy who came around yesterday to give you that message from Mj...you know who I am already.

I am epic.

That's the best intro ever.

Well anyways, they brought me along on the outing because certain persons might need restraining. That's all I'm good for. Not really. But they said they needed me and I will take on my duties honourably.

And also I was the only one whose car was working at the time.

So we came up to this super-fancy restaurant after about 45 minutes of getting lost - it was nearly 1:00 by then. Actually it wasn't that fancy, it was a McDonald's.

SO we walked in the doors and it seemed OK. Ryuga was in an all right mood; so far the most disruptive thing he'd done so far was to throw a cinder block out the car window at a weird driver lady. The window wasn't open.

We all went up to order; I won't tell you that part, it's boring. What was important was when Ryuga got a fish burger and demanded for Mj to taste it and make sure it wasn't poison. He probably poisoned it himself just so he could get rid of her.

It wasn't poison, though, it was mustard. The really green kind that tastes like paint. And in the middle of lunch this crazy bird flew in. He looked like he'd got his brains blown up by some maniac on a piano. And then he came over and tried to eat our food.

Well I was the guardian so I got the spoon that I carry around just in case and started swatting at it. But all the burgers got crushed. And then I ended up hitting Ryuga in the side of the head, not too hard, but he got really mad at me. I don't know how many cinder blocks he has in that jacket of his; I counted 5 before I escaped to the playground outside.

I sure hope McDonald's has good insurance.

Well I must have hit him in the wrong place because he started walking around like a sleepy chimp and then he just yelled "super monkey" and fell down on that sticky tile floor they always have in McDonald's.

They told us he accidentally got the cactus juice burger by mistake.

Well Mj had to drive him and Kyouya to the ER; Kyouya went with her so she wouldn't faint while she was driving. And since only Ryuga fit lying down on the

back seat, I had to stay until Tsubasa got there. He nearly forgot me for his lovely double-decker burger. And I nearly forgot my armoured spoon.

---

Well that's the story of why there was no chapter yesterday.

# A regular day for Tsubasa

Hey all. Sorry today's chapter was a little late. Today I'm taking a suggestion from nellabean...how does Tsubasa see a regular day?

---

"TSUBASAAAAA!"

Tsubasa was awoken by Mj yelling. As usual, someone screaming his name sufficed as an alarm clock.

A very early one.

"I'm coming", he mumbled groggily. When you had to spend the night at Mj's because cars tended to break down in her driveway, you never got enough sleep.

He trudged downstairs "What's wrong?" Being good-natured, he resisted the urge to yell.

"Kyouya got in a fight. Again", Mj called from the kitchen.

So no breakfast this morning; very well.

Tsubasa stepped over the threshold of the kitchen, where Kyouya was on a chair yelling "OWOWOWOWOWOW" and Mj hadn't even touched him yet.

"Who did you get mad at this time?"

"Some street kid. I don't know. He gets mad at the old lady for trying to cross the street."

"OW. HEY."

"I'm not touching you, Kyouya. You big baby." Mj put the roll of gauze in Tsubasa's hands and went to find something for breakfast.

It really should've been the opposite; Mj hated cooking. Cooking hated her right back. But she was tired of dealing with Kyouya.

Soon the smell of toast came from the oven. The smell of an unbathed Masamune

came from the living room as he walked towards the food-smell.

"Uh-uh. Masamune, you go take a shower. Then you can have breakfast." Mj whirled him around. Tsubasa sighed and wondered if Masamune had ever had a mother.

Kyouya pretended to die on the chair. Gingka laughed from the doorway. "I bet I can fake-die better than you..."

"Bet you can't."

"I can too. Right, Tsubasa?"

"Uh...I don't know."

"He said yes."

"No, he said -"

"That's secret code for yes."

"No it's not, Gingka", Tsubasa said.

"..oh. Well, you judge the fake-dying contest, then."

"Kyouya doesn't need to be falling on the floor right now", Mj intervened. "He just got in another fight."

"Oh, did he beat you, Kyouya?"

"Tsubasa, would you tell them to stop?"

"Hey, stop it."

"NO, he didn't BEAT ME, I...got run over by a car."

"No. You -"

"Guys -"

"Tsubasa, quit encouraging them!"

"I'm not! HEY, stop it!"

Mj grabbed Kyouya by the back of the vest and sat him in a chair. "Now shut your mouth." She put a plate of toast in front of him, miraculously unburnt.

"Hey, how come Kyouya didn't have to take a shower?" Masamune was back.

"Because he got in a fight. Did you wash your hair?"

"Yeah."

"He just ran his head under the spout again", Ryuga reported from the bathroom.

"Masamune, go take a shower."

Masamune stomped out of the room.

"Here, Gingka. DON'T...don't burn yourself, that's hot. Let me do it." Mj did not trust Gingka with the hot pan.

"Tsubasa, will you go wake up the boys?"

"Okay." Tsubasa entered Matt and Mikey's room. "Hey. Psst. Matt. Wake up."

"Noooo...ten more minutes..." Matt rolled over with the pillow on his head.

"MATT, there's toast."

"Is it raisin?"

"No."

"I only like it with raisins..."

"Mikey, tell your brother to wake up." Mikey snored on under the blanket.  
"MIKEY." Tsubasa removed the boy from his bed and set him on the floor.

"MJ! TSUBASA PULLED ME OFF THE BED..."

"No he didn't", Mj called from the kitchen. "Hey, Kyouya, don't do that. That's disgusting."

Tsubasa managed to get Matt out of bed and walked back into the kitchen. Masamune came from the bathroom a minute later.

"Did you wash your hair?"

"Yes."

"Did you use soap?"

"No." Masamune left again.

"Gingka, pick up your jacket. MATT! WHERE ARE YOU!"

Tsubasa went to investigate. Matt was asleep on the floor. Mikey couldn't find his shirt. Gracie wouldn't leave the boys alone.

"Gracie, stay out of your brothers' room. MATT. HEY. DOORMAT." Tsubasa pulled the kid off the floor. He found Mikey's shirt.

"Tsubasa, I lost my doll."

"Not now, Grace. Go tell your sister."

Tsubasa came out into the kitchen again.

"Gingka! You ate all the toast!"

"Well, why don't you make some more?"

"Guys, quit arguing..." Mj got between Ryuga and Gingka.

"I'll make the toast."

"Masamune, did you wash your hair?"

"Yes, Tsubasa."

"Did you use soap?"

"Yes."

"Did you use water?"



"Man, you guys are SO demanding." Masamune left again in a huff.

"Okay, Kyouya, go and clean up before you go to work." Kyouya obediently stood.

"Oh, Tsubasa, you're back...where's Grace? She needs to eat before she leaves for Adelyn's house..."

"She can't find her doll."

"GRACE! Your doll's here by the sink!"

Grace came into the room. "Mikey's asleep."

"Ryuga, will you go get Mikey?"

"I'm not your babysitter."

"Pleeeeeease?"

"Fine."

"He's in a better mood than usual", Tsubasa remarked.

"Please make sure Kyouya doesn't take my car, Gingka."

"Can I eat now?"

"Oh, Masamune. Did you -"

"YES, already!"

"Okay, good. MATT!" Matt stumbled into the room with Mikey.

"Coffee..."

"Eat your breakfast." Ryuga was gone for work now, as well as Kyouya. Masamune swallowed down his toast and left for school. Gingka could be seen down the drive with his red hair standing out like a flag.

Mj plopped the boys down at the table with their schoolwork and drove Gracie to Adelyn's house. When she came back, Mikey had managed to pour milk all over the dog and Ryuga's car wouldn't work.

It was just another regular day.

# Important update

Hi everyone, I regret to inform you that there won't be a chapter today or tomorrow. I've got a killer headache right now and I'm flat out of working ideas.

I hope to be able to post something on Monday, but unless something hilariously chaotic happens between now and then...or I get a suggestion (hint hint)...I might not make it.

Once again, I'm super sorry, guys.

Keep those smiles coming.

- Mj

# Public libraries and how you can help

Hey all, it's Saturday. Normally I don't do this. And I know you're fed up with all the non-chapters.

But this is important.

As authors/authoresses, we know the value of a good story/book. Probably all of us love the library, whether we go there to check out books or print out copies of our own stories from those little 5-cent copy machines so we can bind them and put them in our bookshelves.

But some libraries shut down because not enough people love them. Geekthelibrary is helping fund libraries who don't get enough community support, and acting to spread the word so more will join in the geek revolution.

If you go to , you'll find a place where you can contribute! Whether you choose to enter what you geek or buy geek gear to show support and give money, you'll be helping out.

You can even see my name at the top of the list - mj geeks japan! :D

So go help out now! Let's fill up that list!

Please repost this on one of your stories, and spread the word! :D

# We're back

First another quick message, read this and do this and I promise you can read the story. DO IT FOR THE SAKE OF FREEDOM.

EVERYONE! SOPA IS BACK! WARN EVERYONE!

A message from dracohalo117 and Leaf Ranger...SOPA is back, that is right people, the bill that is threatening to take away our freedoms on the internet and beyond is BACK, and not only is it back, but it is trying to be passed quietly so nobody notices, SOPA will guarantee that anybody who streams a video, whether it be on youtube, a walkthrough for a video game, or a kid singing a song that is 'copyrighted' they will be treated as a felon, that is right, a FELON, do you understand me? YOU will be treated like the highest form of criminal for uploading a video game walkthrough on youtube, for singing a song on karaoke, hell, you could be arrested and treated as a felon for posting a screenshot...

Now, why am I telling you this? Because this is only just the beginning, how long until Fanfiction is being attacked, how long until a fanfiction writer is being carted off to a maximum state prison for writing a character from Naruto into their fanfic, or a character from Bleach, or a character from Sekirei or Seikon no Qwaser, Highschool DxD, Trinity Blood, Witchblade, how long until THAT crap is happening? I assure you that if this passes, it will not be long, oh no, it will not be long at all, because once this passes, then ANYTHING goes, Fanfiction will be attacked for using canon characters in a fanon manner, authors will be arrested for writing a book whose main character has glasses, just like in another series, artists will be arrested and confined for using sapphire blue in the iris of one of their characters like another author. We CANNOT let this happen!

Don't believe us? Look at the links below, remove the spaces, see for yourself, and please, PLEASE spread the word and fight this assault on our freedoms, because this isn't just going to affect americans, oh no, it will affect EVERYBODY across the globe!

: / [www . huffingtonpost 2013/08/07/unauthorized-streaming-felony\\_n\\_3720479 . html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/08/07/unauthorized-streaming-felony_n_3720479.html)

: / [www . washingtonpost blogs/the-switch/wp/2013/08/05/sopa-died-in-2012-but-obama-administration-wants-to-revive-part-of-it /](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-switch/wp/2013/08/05/sopa-died-in-2012-but-obama-administration-wants-to-revive-part-of-it/)

: / www . techdirt articles/20130805/12472124074/administration-cant-let-go-wants-to-bring-back-felony-streaming-provisions-sopa . shtml

and the video which caused us to find out about this horrible thing...remove the spaces, and spread the word...

: / www . youtube watch?v=1fTt4K4Cae4

POST THIS MESSAGE AS AN UPDATE TO EACH OF YOUR FICS! PM EVERY AUTHOR YOU'VE EVER TALKED TO AND TELL THEM THE MESSAGE! TELL ALL YOUR OFFLINE FRIENDS AND FB FRIENDS! SPREAD THE WORD FAR AND WIDE!

### **A way to help:**

People, this is serious! The government want to pass a law that would make Fanfictions banned. To help us stop this nonsense, you have to sign a petition

on the link below:

**petitions. / petition/stop-sopa-2013/ LMzMVrQF**

They are going to make fanfictions and all sorts of fanbase stuff ILLEGAL AND A FEDERAL CRIME unless you sign up on this webpage.

America is supposed to be a country of freedom of speech. Fanfics, game walkthroughs, fan art aren't hurting anyone in fact, they're probably helping to promote, yet they want to get you in trouble for doing just that.

DON'T let them get away from it. They were stopped last time so let's do it again. If you can then help sign a petition, tell everyone you can, repost anywhere you can, to show them we WON'T stand for it. And we will NEVER stand for it.

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Politics aside, we can get to the fun.

Okay everybody. Today is a special day. It's a chapter for Tsubasa since he didn't get to go to London with me, and a chapter for AnimeEmma since she's having a contest. AND I LOVE CONTESTS.

This is also a chapter for all of you to enjoy so you can smile on this lovely day.

"Mj?"

Em sat at her kitchen table early on a Friday morning, her algebra homework spread out before her. Mj was homeschooled and so she did all her work at the kitchen table; in a sense, all her work was homework.

"Yes, Tsubasa", Mj murmured, preoccupied.

"What's this?"

He slid a scrap of paper into her line of vision, a small card, it seemed. Mj glanced at it.

"Oh, it looks like you got invited to a party."

Tsubasa paled visibly.

"Oh hey, are you ok? You look a little flustered there."

"No, no, I'm fine."

Tsubasa seemed cut off as he took the invitation and turned back the way he had come.

Em wondered what he could be so nervous about. But she had other things to worry about:

"X plus Y equals 995. Find Z."

She sighed and went back to the impossible maths problem.

---

Tsubasa stood before the wardrobe in his room, still stunned at the invitation. The problem was...

Tsubasa didn't like parties.

But it was from Ryo; how could he say no?

How could he say yes?

He had to go.

The way Tsubasa usually solves things is by breaking them up into problems, lining them up in order of urgency, and fixing them through the necessary steps. The first thing he had to worry about was what to wear.

Tsubasa had a closet full of impractical things like huge belts that could fit 5 times around your waist, capes with dumb stuff embroidered on them, glittery scarves his aunt had sent for some reason, and where had that fake beard come from?

Also flip-flops. Almost never had he worn flip-flops.

With a sigh, he fingered the material of a tunic from India and wondered where he had got it. It was time to get dressed up and test the outfit on Em.

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"Mj?"

"Hmm." Mj murmured something unfathomable.

"I need you to help me."

"First the algebra. Then we can drive your eagle to the vet."

Tsubasa examined the problem. "It's 46."

Mj flipped to the back of the workbook. "Ooooh, I get it now. Thanks."

Finally she looked up. "Since when do you have a beard? Tsubasa, what are you doing?"

"I have no idea." Tsubasa was wearing the most ridiculous outfit Mj had ever seen, and that was saying something. Mj was prone to "interesting" wardrobe choices herself.

You see, at a loss of what to do and loathe to wear his day clothes to a party, Tsubasa decided to throw together everything in his closet and see how he looked.

Tsubasa has no idea what he is doing.

"Are you...you know what, I have NO idea what to say."



"I'm trying to decide what to wear..."

"...to the party."

"Yes."

"Well, why don't you just wear your regular clothes?"

"Because it's a special occasion. I can't do that."

"Don't you have like some collared shirt or something? You know, up until now I thought you just had like a million copies of that purple vest and tan pants stuff."

"No, I just wash it every day."

"And sweaters and jeans at Winter."

"Yes."

"So go get a t-shirt from my dad's closet and wear some of those jeans with it."

"But -"

"Shhh." The authoress held up a finger. "No words. You don't need to dress that fancy. It says on here that it's a casual get-together for the members of your status tier; don't stress. You'll probably just sit and drink coffee all evening and talk about...spy stuff."

"Oh, okay." Feeling silly, Tsubasa returned to his bedroom.

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Tsubasa stood in the living room an hour before the party was due to start; he figured it was a good idea to get his courage up early.

Mj walked past with her head in a book and looked up when she saw him and Aquila.

"Oh, are you getting ready to leave already? It's only 6. Ryuga's not even back with your van yet." Ryuga had taken the van to bring his pet lizard to the vet clinic.

"I know. I'm just getting ready."

"You can't bring Aquila with you..."

"WHAT!? Why?"

"You think that everybody else will bring their shark and their sloth? No. He'll probably agitate everyone else."

"But -"

"Shhh. Now you're going to need a jacket, Tsubasa. It's cold out there." She handed him a hoodie of her dad's. "Relax. There'll only be about 6 or 7 other people there, and Ryo is in India now. You know that."

"Okay."

"I'll take care of Aquila while you're gone, don't worry."

"Thanks, Em."

"Just remember: don't take all the sugar, and make sure not to let anybody sneeze on you. There's something going around...ARCTURO! COME BACK WITH THAT SHOE!" Mj's little pet dragon that she'd gotten from some alternate universe raced past with her father's leather boot.

And Tsubasa was left in the living room to wait by himself.

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As he drove down the road, he suddenly felt nervous. Like maybe he forgot something.

Aquila.

He had to bring Aquila; Aquila would go crazy without him. Mj and Arcturo would go crazy too, not to mention Aznurath, Metrion, and Zintos, the other dragons. She probably had a fifth hidden back there with the baby llama.

Tsubasa sneaked in the door; Zintos and Arcturo were fighting over the boot while Mj was frantically trying to find the bottle of pepper spray to separate them.

Aquila chirped softly and hopped onto Tsubasa's shoulder; he rode down the drive with Aquila in the front seat, feeling much better.

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Mj squealed as Metrion entered the mini-dragon fight; and then Airblazer too. Her secret dragon.

Finally she managed to pull poor Metrion out from under the other dragons and separated Zintos, Arcturo, and Blazer. Metrion scurried around her neck and Mj looked around; Aquila was suddenly gone.

"Aquila! AQUILA!" Metrion squawked in alarm as Aznurath suddenly tried to steal her place around Mj's neck. She left the dragons for awhile and ran to find the eagle.

3 hours later, the door opened. It was dark now, and Blazer and Zintos had disappeared to go hunting. Still no sign of Aquila. Aznurath raced to the door and hissed menacingly at whoever was coming in, while Arcturo and Metrion opened their sleepy eyes to peep at the commotion.

"Oh, Tsubasa! You're back! There's Aquila...was she outside?"

"He. It's a he, Aquila has always been a HE, Mj."

Mj looked sceptical. "You smell like coffee. Was I right?"

"No, you were wrong. There were 8 other people. And somebody did bring their sloth. Hey, I didn't know you had a fifth dragon!" Blazer and Zintos raced in the open door, tousling over each other.

"Oh, yeah. Well, I'm going to bed now."

Mj scooped up the 5 dragons in her arms and deposited them on the back porch, then trudged off to bed. Tsubasa sighed in relief.

Zintos had come right back around the house and in the front door; Tsubasa picked up the little reptile and murmured, "Don't tell Em where I really was tonight; between you and me, I never went to the party. I was at the library the whole time." Zintos chirped in answer, and Tsubasa smiled as he put the dragon with his squabbling fellows.

# ASGADUHY and his walrus shaped mother

AND so we come to Tuesday, dearest folk-people. In the hopes that dragons stay out of your boots and little goat-childs don't eat your stuff, let us smile on this bright day.

Okay. In explanation for the mood, my mum was reading "just so stories" to my sister. If your mum didn't read it to you when you were little, you should definitely read it now. It's Rudyard Kipling and it's totally hilarious. Thank you, dead man, for the most 'scrutiating inspiratio.

It is meant to be read loudly and in a scrutiatingly nonsensical voice so that those people who do not like it will be most annoyed.

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Now take note, my best beloved, that on this day there was a certain man by the name of Nile. And there was also the most scrutiating little yellow-haired demon who was of the habit of annoying those around him, which you must never do, my best beloved.

Now on this day - for it was a fine day my bestbeloved - the little yellow-haired devil who we will call by the name of ASGADUHY (For he had another name but nobody ever dared to speak it) was in a scrutiatingly annoyingish mood mybestbeloved.

And so he was asking of the Nile-man to give him an ice cream which is the food of little demons like himself, but which is always bad for them because they get on sugar highs and ANNOYTHELIVINGDAYLIGHTOUTOFOYOU, which you must never do mybestbeloved.

And so the Nile-man was scrutiatingly annoyed but he knew that he must not do what the little devil told him to. For if he did there would be chaos and its guts spilt all over the place. So he told the little devil, "Why, ASGADUHY (though of course he said his real name which you must never speak mybestbeloved), you should go and tell your little father that he is to buy you ice cream so I will not be so scrutiatingly annoyedthelivingdaylightsoutof."

And so ASGADUHY the little demon went away to his little father, who was much more of his brother but they called him Tsubasa the Eagle Person. And Tsubasa the Eagle Person was scrutiatingly busy with a scrutiatingly busying business,



dinner at his table. But that is something that nobody knew for nobody was looking at it, and it is what we very-mature-peopleoftheday call TOTALLY RANDOM.

SO the poor Nile-man was sent away by his little mother to wash his little face off in the little bathroom which was shaped like a walrus. But the marks of the turtle of his friend would not come off. And that is how the Nile-man got his scrutiatingly weird-looking face painting. And that is why he looks like a clown to this very day.

And the little ASGADUHY was always wishing for his little ice cream all day and so he followed the little Nile-man, and that is how walking your dog came to be invented. But he tripped over a rock and sprained his little scalp and was sent to the great DOCTOROFTHEWORLD. And so he never showed his face at the door of the little walrus bathroom (where the Nile-man and his little tiny mother always will live).

And the great man which is rearing of the eagle took that which is called the spawn of a cow, or Masamoomoo by the little ASGADUHY, and went to the couch of Ice Creams which is called Slab of Stone, and had demon food without the little ASGADUHY, and he got chocolate too which little demons are always fond of. And the little ASGADUHY (for he lived with them in those days bestbeloved) smelt of the chocolate demon kibble on the breath of his little father as he walked in the door-which-is-not-a-window. And he became the most scrutiatingly rageful and vowed forever to avenge his lovely Couch. And that is how TV was invented one day and nobody not even me-who-made-it-all-up knows how on earth that came to happen.

And finally the Sheep That Still Is walked right off the table of the great Phonic and still is walking on the road to THIS VERY DAY.

And that, mybestbeloved, is now and still is and always was and will be, that which they call the end but which ASGADUHY calls NOOOOO.

# Grocery Stores

Mj waltzed through the kitchen, humming some unpredictable tune. She was in a good mood; the dragons were staying out of trouble (since they mostly were asleep anyway) and Kyouya was not here. This made her happy.

But as she opened the fridge, her mood died. There was almost nothing in the fridge. No milk. No vegetables. Her mum and dad were on a business trip; and they'd left nothing to eat. She scowled; she'd have to send somebody for groceries.

She sneaked through the house. Perhaps Tsubasa could go? - no. He was fast asleep on the guest bed. He'd had a long couple of days she knew, and didn't want to wake him.

Maybe she could go? Never. Her parents had left her the responsibility of taking care of her younger siblings, and she couldn't take them with her - they were chaos when it came to shopping.

Masamune? He was only 14 and had no car.

She sighed. Either she could call the unreliable Kyouya to get her some groceries, or she could go find Ryuga off somewhere and send him. She chose to do the latter, as even Ryuga was less prone to chaos than Kyouya, and actually had a car in his possession.

And so an hour later Ryuga slid into the front seat of his car with a full grocery list and a dragon on the front seat - Metrion was due for her appointment and Mj wanted him to drop her off. He huffed impatiently. The sooner he got Metrion out of his car, the better.

As he pulled onto the interstate, all of a sudden he heard an unearthly screech and something sharp and scaly flew into his face. He yelled and pulled off onto the side of the road.

A very agitated Atlantean dragon was standing on his dashboard, hissing like a cat. Airblazer had sneaked into the car while he wasn't looking and was on the verge of blowing flames onto his wind shield, ultimately melting it. He carefully grabbed the little dragon and threw him in the backseat; there was no way he could turn around in this traffic. Airblazer would just have to stay at the vet with Metrion.

As he continued down the road, he was certain that no vet who had any sense would accept dragons as his patients.

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Ryuga grabbed the rain poncho off the backseat, knowing it had seen its last day; Airblazer and Metrion's claws would tear through it in a heartbeat. But better the poncho than his face.

Walking into the veterinary facility, he dumped the two squabbling dragons on the counter. The vet tech smiled as Metrion crawled out from the confines of the shredded plastic, taking the little dragon in her hands. "Ah, yes, Metrion, here for your appointment, aren't you?"

"Yeah, the sooner the better", mumbled Ryuga.

"You're not the owner of these animals, are you?" She scowled at the infamous Blazer and then at Ryuga.

"No, I'm just dropping them off for a friend."

"Blazer isn't required to be here for another month, and you don't have the ownership papers for these dragons."

"Listen, you can call her or whatever, but I'm not going to leave these two demons in my car while I try to get the groceries."

The vet tech gave him a withering glare and called Mj on the phone. "Hello?...Yes...yes, your friend dropped off your little Metrion over at the office and he's not qualified for possession of her...I see. Yes. Well as long as you authorized guardianship, then I can give you clearance this time. Yes, have a nice day, ma'am. Goodbye."

She glared at Ryuga again. he glared right back.

"I'm afraid you still don't have clearance to leave Airblazer here. We're not authorized to take him until the appointed date."

"I'm not taking him to the grocery store with me!"

As they stood there arguing, neither noticed that Luis had walked in with his own Atlantean dragon, whom was under his care for the summer.



"I'll take Blazer home with me", he said, stepping between Ryuga and the technician. "He's going to melt the entire vet clinic in a second." Gingerly he picked up the plastic wrapped Airblazer and left. Ryuga sighed in relief and glared at the vet tech one last time before stamping out the door.

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Ryuga stood under the overhang of the grocery store, stalling and watching the rain pool in the gutters. He didn't know where of 3 places he would rather be: Here in the rain, inside the scary grocery store, or at home with an angry Mj and 3 dragons.

He chose here in the rain. Grocery stores...he hated grocery stores. If only Tsubasa had been awake, he'd still be at home right now.

Finally he mustered up his courage and grabbed a shopping cart. The list was placed carefully in the front of the cart to where it wouldn't fall over on the floor, and he set off through the double doors with a quaking heart.

People...the grocery store was filled with people...and...pineapples... Ryuga raced away from the pineapples. Ever since that incident with the pineapple tree and the freaky unicorn-thing, he could not stand pineapples.

The first item on the list was hot cocoa; as it grew into the winter months, Mj found that just hot cocoa was enough to pacify Kyouya most days. A little boy and his mother were in the same aisle, and the little boy tugged on Ryuga's sleeve.

"Hey, mister?...why you wearing a crown on your head in the store? Cuz my mum said, if you're wearing metal they smash you. In the doors."

"I never said that, dear." His mother was preoccupied with the coffee.

"That's not true, kid." Ryuga turned away, gently tugging his sleeve out of the child's grasp. But the boy followed him.

"My name's Kevin...what's yours?" when he got no answer, he persisted. "Why you buying chocolate milk? My mum says it's only for kids. Not grownups like you, mister. Do you have a kid? Is her name Minny? Cuz she looks just like you, mister. I'm gonna tell Minny I met her daddy, at the store and she'll get chocolate milk later..."

Ryuga rolled his eyes. "I don't have a kid. I'm too young for that. And it's not

chocolate milk, it's cocoa..."

The boy was talking into one of those pink plastic cell phones that candy comes in. "Hi Minny, you're dad's at the store buying you chocolate milk...ok I gotta go bye. Why are you getting cocoa?"

"My friend uses it to tame lions", Ryuga said distractedly. "Please will you go away?"

"My mum says it's not nice to say that. Do you have a lion? You look more like a kitty cat kind of guy. Do you have a ferret?"

"NO, I don't have a ferret." Ryuga found the list. Milk. He could get milk.

As he walked along, Kevin trailed behind him. "Do you have a grocery list? My mum has one too. Can you read yet, mister?"

"Yes, I can read."

"Are you getting milk? My mum says if you don't drink milk then you get a disease on your foot. Do you go to school and learn grownup stuff? Are you a DOCTOR!?"

"NO, I'm not a doctor. I will never be. And for that the world will thank me."

"Does the world like you, Doctor Mister Crown Guy? Cuz mum says laugh, and the world laughs with you, and cry, and the hall monitor will send you to the principal..."

"Your mum's pretty smart, huh. Now go find her."

"My mum's right over there. She can see me. Her back head has eyes. And also a nose too and it looks like her face. Do you like chocolate?"

Ryuga ignored Kevin. Hmmm...low fat or skim? He knew Masamune liked to drink soy milk. He hovered near the soy milk.

"My mum says that kind of milk is from fake cows that eat dirt all the time instead of proper food like pizza..."

Ryuga chose 3 per cent milk. Mj often had fresh goat milk but none of the goats had any milk this time of year. The next item on the list was "frozen assorted vegetables." As he tried to pronounce it, Kevin said:

"Are you singing, Mister Crown Guy Doctor Man? My mum says if you sing in public then Ronald McDonald's brother will come to eat you in the night."

"She was wrong. Frozen axe...frozen assorted vet...forget it. Frozen something."

"Frozen-assorted-vegetables?"

"Yes, thank you. Now will you go away please?"

"You're mean. My mum says mean people bite dogs. DO you bite dogs? Cuz if you do, that's very mean of you. Ferrets taste way better anyway, my mum says."

Kevin trailed him all around the grocery store, telling him about his horrible frozen brother and his kitten which ate a tree. Ryuga said nothing in response. Soon, as his grocery shopping got finished up, a voice came over the intercom. "Hi there, we'd like to report a lost child. If you've seen this child, please bring him to Customer Service...his name is Kevin Hallmark."

Ryuga slung Kevin into his shopping cart and headed for customer service. He reached the place just as Kevin was saying, "But my middle name is Martha Andrew Stevens Spiderman..."

His mother grabbed him with a relieved expression on her face and hit Ryuga in the head with her handbag. "CHILD THIEF!" Then she left.

Ryuga paid for his groceries and went home. Mj was happy to see him. "I heard you had a little trouble with Airblazer, are you okay?" She examined his face thoughtfully. "Don't worry. I'm a doctor."

"The world would thank you if you weren't."

"What's this?" She pointed to the welt behind his ear.

"It was Airblazer", he lied. He didn't want to get blamed for being purse-smacked.

And so they put the groceries away. Kyouya got home to a nice cup of hot chocolate. And Kevin's mum got a nice letter from Ryuga telling her she needed to stop influencing her child to eat ferrets.

# A writer's crazy dialogue

Luis and Kyouya hid in the garage, behind the oversized plywood spattered with spray paint. Luis's phone rested on one of the shelves where it had a clear view of the centre of the garage. They tried to keep from sneezing. And from laughing.

You see, an authoress's insanity is a delicate thing, and if she doesn't cultivate it properly, she may end up losing it. Thus Mj's insane genius was fertilized by "epic dialogues" on the garage. Luis, who had been victim to the hearing of one such dialogue, decided it would be nice caught on tape. And finally - with the help of Kyouya (she's talking to Sigmund again) - he had done it.

Now they watched as Mj carried poor Sigmund the cat around the garage and talked to him.

"You see, Sigmund, first there's the thing about dolphins. They don't climb trees like cats do." Today, evidently, she was explaining the alien world to dear Sigmund.

"They prefer to climb anemonun...ammonia...anemonenes...oh, you know what I'm trying to say, don't you? Well dolphins have their own kind of trees under water. And they love them.

"When a dolphin climbs a water tree it has to use its front feet because it hasn't got any back feet."

"Just what kind of a dolphin is she associated with?" Kyouya whispered to Luis.

"I have no idea."

"And so if you were ever to go in the ocean with your little cat swimming gear, you would find ALL these fish, but not the kind you can eat. They only taste like Ryuga's cupcakes."

Luis snickered.

"Now when you catch one of those what you have to do is go over to Australia and have a kangaroo lose it in the jungle, because kangaros lose stuff in the best of places. And then you find it again and it's grown a fish tree."

Sigmund meowed and pawed at her fingers.

"Once you get to the fish tree you've got to dig it up and bring it back home with you where you can grow it properly. And only cats can do that - your mum Adelaide and your dad Beo were adventurer cats and they risked their lives for that very fish tree in the pond out back."

"We don't have a pond out back."

"I know. Shh, she'll hear us."

"You see, you come from a long line of explorers - the was Meowco Polo, and also the Spaniard who discovered Americat. And if you ever came across a large fish in the middle of nowhere, you'd know it came from that very fish tree. Because the fish tree that Adelaide and Beo brought back to me was the best fish tree of them all."

"But Adelaide and Beo ran away once they got the fish tree back; you see they liked Australia so much when they had went to get the kangaroo, that they ran back there to live with another person or maybe survive on their own. Australia doesn't get rain you know, because there is a HUGE dimensional hole that covers its skies, and it goes to the same dimension the Ninja Turtles live in. You were a reaaaaaallllly little kitty whenever Leo and Donnie came over to visit out of the same hole, and you wouldn't remember that."

"Even I don't remember that", Luis muttered.

"Now someday you can go back to Australia and find your mum and dad. They'll be soooo happy to see you! And once you get there you can go ahead and drop off the little fish for the fish tree too."

"And then you just bring it back after the kangaroo's brought it to the jungle, and it'll grow. Now Luis and Kyouya - "

Luis froze.

" - they would be even better kangaroos than the ones over there. They're just as jumpy-around-y as those kangaroos, and the best at losing things too."

Kyouya bristled beside Luis, who placed a hand on his shoulder to stop him from jumping at her.

"Once you get there, you have to try the pears. I heard the pears in the Forest of Fish Trees are the BEST. They even taste like fish-flavoured liver..."

"Ew."

"...and they're magic."

Luis shook his head incredulously.

"They give you magical rocket POWAHS. And then you can fly right back here with Adelaide and Beo. You see dear cat, that's all there is to it!"

So saying, she placed poor Sigmund back on the ground and walked inside. The garage door shut as soon as she was in, remote controlled as it was only from the inside. And Luis and Kyouya found that they were locked in.

See what you get for spying on geniuses?

# Something new, for a change

Ok. If any of you have read After Story, this should all be familiar; some tips? Atsutomo and Kazuko are Kyouya's kids. Kelle is the girl next door who babysits them allllll the time. And their mum sorta...died.

This was written for Tiger demon of light's contest. And it's not an excerpt, just kind of a never-before-seen prequel. So yaaay!

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"Ow. OWWW. BAD. NO, STOP. ATSUTOMO!"

Kyouya walked into Kelle's apartment to find a total wreck. Canned clam chowder was splattered all over the place and a little blond boy, about 5 years old, was standing on the counter about to throw another huge glob of it at his sister.

"TATEGAMI-SAN!" Kyouya whirled. Kelle and Kazuko were fortressed behind the couch.

"Yes?"

"I think this has turned into my worst nightmare. YOUR SON IS TAKING AFTER YOU!"

Kyouya raced up to the counter to remove Atsu but was hit in the face with a glob of the chowder as thanks for his effort at parenthood. He sacrificed his vest as a napkin and joined Kelle and Kaz behind the couch.

"Why on earth do you have so much canned chowder!?"

"I didn't buy it, that stuff just kinda...appears, like cheese balls and those strawberry candy things your grandad gives you! You never really buy them."

"Now's not the time for quantum physics theories, Kelle! WE'RE ABOUT TO DIE."

"Well he's YOUR son, YOU do something about it!"

"He doesn't listen to me."

"Whose fault is that!"

"It's yours!"

"WHAT!?"

Suddenly Atsu was behind the couch with his lethal chowder of lethality. Kelle shrieked and retreated to her bedroom with Kaz.

Kyouya ran after her and pounded on the door. "Let me in!"

"No! He's your son, you deal with it!"

"What am I supposed to do?"

"I have no idea. Tell him to stop or something."

Kyouya marched up to Atsu. "STOP."

"Otousan no jixyojishi no watashino te de shinu!" Die at my hands of epic, dad!

"Who taught you to say that!?"

"You did!" And then Atsu ran away from his father, presumably in search of more ammunition.

"Oh, I did, didn't I..."

"SHINUUUU!" Atsu's war cry. "DIEEEE!"

"Ok, I am SO not responsible for that!" Poor Kyouya was being assaulted by stale crackers. Kelle screamed from her room; she had to get a lock for her pantry or something.

Kyouya was sure all hope was lost. Oh why did it have to end this way? Couldn't it have been something more...epicer than stale crackers!?

And once again Kelle saved his life. She jumped right into the line of cracker-fire and offered Atsu peace in the form of chocolate. Soon he was sitting on his bottom on the carpet with a candy bar.

"This is how you've handled my kids for the past few months? Excessive chocolate consumption!?"



"Well, there's no other way. TV even doesn't stop them."

"How have you even survived?"

"You tell me." Kelle pulled a vacuum cleaner out of the closet. "Are you taking them home now?"

"Yeah." Kyouya hastily scooped up the twins and hustled out of her apartment before Kaz could go she-demon and explode the vacuum cleaner.

---

Kelle collapsed on the saggy mattress with a sigh of relief; cleaning up after a psychotic 5-year-old was harder than it seemed. Somehow Atsu had managed to get chowder on the INSIDE of the couch cushions.

She wondered how much longer it would be until he was a mini disaster cannon like his dad had been at the young age of 15. Blowing up stadiums, ripping up warehouses, and joining the dark side for the promise of cookies.

She drifted off to sleep filled with dread at the chaos to come the next day.

---

Her phone rang almost as soon as she shut her eyes, it seemed. She checked the time; 4 in the morning...

"Hello?" she mumbled into the thick haze of sleep obscuring her vision.

"Hey. It's Kyouya."

"Who else would it be?"

"You mean nobody else calls you at 5 in the morning? Like, ever?"

"It's four. And not that I'm aware of."

"Oh. Didn't realise it was that early. Oh well. I need to drop off the kids at your place early this morning, something's come up."

She groaned inwardly. Great.

"Are they asleep?"

"Yes, they - " A little voice came through the phone. "Daddy, my teddy bear just wet the bed."

"No."

"Great. Now I have to put them back to sleep."

"Kazuko, go away please. I'll deal with your bear in a sec."

"Who ever authorized you to be a father?"

"Nobody in their right mind, that's for sure", Kyouya sighed. "Thanks anyway for taking care of them."

"I'd say you're welcome. But it being 4 in the morning and all...you're really not."

"Sorry."

"Just bring them over here now."

She hung up the phone and fell against the bed with a sigh of mortal pain before stumbling out to the living room to open the door. Kazuko immediately bounced in followed by her sleepy brother. At least Atsu was one thing she wouldn't have to worry about; he fell asleep on the couch almost immediately.

She glanced at Kyouya wearily. "Have a good night", he said, smiling sheepishly.

"Yeah, well...thanks anyway. A good imagination kinda helps, doesn't it."

"Sorry again."

"Just go do your special secret-work. The sooner you get done, the better." Kelle shut the door and turned around.

Luckily Atsu was still asleep. Kaz was the only thing she had to worry about.

Well 'only' is an understatement; when she wanted to, Kazuko could cause more trouble than the twins combined. As of now she was jumping around the living room waving her bear around like a flag. Her father must've fed her a bag of sugar before bed or something.

Kyouya returned to a quiet apartment, for some reason; he found only Kelle asleep on the carpet and Atsu and Kaz snoring beside her. Kelle opened her eyes to slits and found him staring down at her.

"Yup, imagination helps, I guess", he commented.

"Yeah. And sedatives."

# CONTEST (UPDATED!)

Hey everybody! I, MajourOrtho, or Majour for short, am holding the epic contest of Now!

Your challenge is to write an epic one-shot in any of the following categories:

Adventure:

Anything you want. Do something totally cool. Will be judged on action and overall epic-ness.

Angst:

Something exploring a bladers' deep fear, perhaps. Will be judged on emotion level.

Drama:

Once again, this'll be judged based on emotion level.

Family:

Centred around a bladers' family. NOT about the future family that the blader will cultivate, this is for another category! About their sister or cousin or parents or whatever. Judged based on fluff and emotion.

Fantasy:

Not my favourite, but cool all the same! Put them in the Artemis Fowl universe. Add a few faeries or whatever in there.

Will be judged based on unbelievableability and action.

Friendship:

Totally give them a best friend! Based on fluff and self-realisation, as well as using things that actually happened.

General:

For anything that doesn't fit with the rest. No judging guidelines.

Horror:

SCARE THE WITS OUT OF THEM, PRETTIES! Kill somebody. Haunt them. Send them to an abandoned mansion. Add lethal dragons. Based on total nightmarishness and how late it keeps us up at night.

Humour:

Make me laugh. Seriously. Judged on funniness.

Hurt/comfort:

Best friend disappears. Father dies. But your sister/friend pulls you through. Based on emotion level and utter hopelessness.

Mystery:

A diamond thief? A talking cat? Solve it, friends, solve! Judged on complexity and action level.

Parody:

Star wars, InuYasha, TMNT, for goodness' sake. Judged on humour and true-to-lifeness.

Poetry:

Humour? Grief? First cooking lesson? Put it into rhyme! Judged on uniqueness and flowiness.

Sci-fi:

Did Masamune find out he was grown in a lab? Was Dunamis originally an alien? Why does Chi-Yun speak in 3rd person? (is he possessed?) TELL ME. Judged by unbelievableability and rich plot.

Suspense:

Cliffhangers galore. Judged by richness and hanging on-able-ness. Also death.

Tragedy:

KILL SOMEBODY! Poison them. Put them in the hospital. Or doom them by means of L-Drago. Do your thing, people. Judged on sadorableness and the ability to make me cry.

---

Put them in the bey universe, but centre the one-shot around your OC. Based on trueness to dimension.

---

Put them in YOUR universe, or mine, or a different one altogether! Based on adventure and scientific backup.

---

Okay, let's get this straight. A little originality is welcome/tolerated in the other stories, but you need to stay as IC as possible. EXCEPT FOR RIGHT HERE!

Change your fate?:

Change the plot! Send Ryuga to the light side, or Gingka to the dark side! Judged on satisfaction.

Future:

What happened after Masamune went home? What does Tsubasa do when he gets back from work? Best of all: IS RYUGA MARRIED!?

Past:

Who was Gingka's mum? How did Ray Striker Come to Be? You get the idea.

Present:

What are the bladers doing, AS WE SPEAK? GO nuts, pretties.

What actually happened:

Fill in the blanks that the episodes left you. Based on Oh-I-didn't-think-of-that.

Narrator:

Choose an episode, any episode, and narrate it in your own words.

---

Here are the general rules for entering ANY category.

NO yaoi, yuri, or like...okay, no romance. So sorry.

Also no cursing or over-violence. All entries are to be rated T or less.

Marriage is allowed. Also having the wife/husband die.

Warnings are required if there's something that my 8-year-old brother couldn't read.

You can enter as many categories as you want, but now, as of 3 September 2013, you may enter as many times as you wish in each category!

You have until midnight on December 31, Texas time.

Things that will get you extra points:

Keeping as IC as possible.

Being able to use something that actually happened to you.

PMing me every time you enter.

Being REALLY over-funny or over-scary.

So you have until a minute after midnight. Have fun!

# Kevin returns

Can't think of anything else to do, don't judge me. Suggestions are sorely needed.

---

"Ryuga, could you go pick up Schroedinger from the vet? My dad took my car to work today."

"NO way. I hate vets."

"You hate everybody."

"No", Ryuga corrected Mj, "I'm just a very misunderstood person."

"I know you are. But so is Schroedinger. Poor puppy was named after a cat. Don't you think he deserves to be picked up on time?"

"Schroedinger wasn't a cat. He was a guy who likes to torture cats. Dogs do too; I think the name fits."

"Will you please go pick him up?"

"You can use my car if I can stay here."

"I'm not leaving you to babysit. Last time you let Jonald have a cat. He's allergic."

"I didn't know."

"I think you'll be better off in a fenced-in facility. Now go please."

"I don't think so, Mj."

"Ryuga. I'll give you free chocolate for a month if you go."

And so that was how Ryuga found himself marching into his own certain doom.

---

"Hi, I'm here to pick up my do...MEI-MEI! WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU DOING HERE!?"



Mei-mei smiled at him from behind the counter. "I needed a job. What's your dog's name?"

"Schroedinger."

"Shoe finger?"

"NO, SCHROEDINGER."

"Scrowinger."

"SCHROE. DINGER. SCHROEDINGER!"

"Ok, ok. Calm down. I'll go get him."

Ryuga stood waiting at the counter as Mei-mei went to the back of the kennel, still trying to pronounce Schroedinger's name. Mei-mei needed speech therapy or something, Ryuga was positive.

As he sat in the plastic chairs near the desk to wait - it seemed that Mei-mei would be taking awhile - a bored-looking teenager came inside with his curly black hair plastered back beneath a baseball cap, slouching as only teenagers can do, with two giggling kids trailing behind him. He looked around and, finding the desk vacant at the moment, took a chair a few seats down from Ryuga. They nodded at each other - it's how teenage boys say hello to people they've never met, if they choose to acknowledge them at all.

The children seemed about 5 or 6 and they sat on the other side of the room, poking each other and giggling every few minutes. The older boy didn't seem to notice.

Finally he made an attempt to be a civilized person. "So you pickin' up your creepy cat or somethin', man?" he drawled in a classic surfer accent.

"No. Friend's dog."

"Maaaaaaan," he said, drawing out the word looooong and sloooow. "I'm just here to pick up my ferret. Brought my brother and his crazy friend along for the ride. Mom's orders."

He glanced down at Ryuga's jacket. "You a doctor or somethin'?"

"No. And for that, I'm sure the world thanks me. You know, some goofy kid asked me that the other day."

"You're goofy, mithter", came a lisping voice from across the room, followed by a giggle. The little girl who had been poking the little boy.

Ryuga looked up, fire blazing in his eyes, a fire which almost immediately died. For there he saw a face he had hoped never to see again.

It was Kevin.

Yes, Kevin Hallmark, from the grocery store of nightmares. Kevin Hallmark, whose mother said that foot diseases came from lack of dairy products. Kevin Hallmark of the frozen assorted vegetables and the kitten which ate a tree, Kevin Martha Andrews Spiderman Hallmark.

And Kevin saw him back.

"HEY! Minny, it's the guy who I though was your dad! He bites DOGS."

Ryuga groaned inwardly and pulled his jacket over his face.

"You know what? I'm gonna go find that desk lady, little Einstein needs to come home."

Kevin's older brother wandered off as Ryuga bolted upright. Einstein? EINSTEIN the FERRET!? What was it with these American people and their tendency to name pets after men of science? Sigmund Freud the cat, Schroedinger the dog, Einstein the ferret. EINSTEIN the FERRET. Good gravy.

And he also realised that Older Hallmark Boy had left him alone with Minny and Kevin-of-nightmares.

Kevin raced over to him. "Hi, Mister Doctor Singer Man. Whatcha doin?"

"Wishing you weren't here", Ryuga muttered grumpily.

"You're a grumpy face, you know that, Mister Crown Man? You need a nice song. Minny, let's sing the happy song to the Guys who's Not Your Dad!" And so he and Minny started to sing. Only a more accurate description would be the Sound of a Million Cats in Pain.

"Oh, if you're happy and you know it clap your hands, oh if you're my sunshine and you know it stomp your feet, oh you make me happyyyyyy where the BUFFALO ROAM..."

"Kevin, please stop", yelled Ryuga.

"OH GIVE ME A HOME WHERE THE THPIDER CRAWLED UP THE ROW YOUR  
BOAT...oh if you're happy and you know it OH THUTHANNA don't you cry for me  
because I lie over the OCEAN MY BONNY OF THE THEA."

"THEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE  
EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEENDDDDD LITTLE MONKEYS!"

And finally they shut their little mouths.

But not for long.

"Mithter Doctor King, you're not my dad." Minny was glaring up at him.

"I KNOW I'm not your dad, Minny. I have NO KIDS. I do NOT LIKE KIDS."

"Why, Mithter King Doctor Theuth vegetable?"

"My NAME is RYUGA. And I don't like kids because they're annoying."

"Yeah, kids are annoying", Kevin agreed solemnly. "Hey Mister Loofah - "

"Ryuga."

"Kazooka, are you a king or something?"

"No. Actually the proper term is Emperor."

"Oh. Snezzmefferr."

"No, EMPEROR."

"OH, you're a SNEKULER?"

"No, Kevin, I think he thaid RETHCUER."

"EMPER...oh, forget it. Go find your brother."

"You mean Keith?"

"Yeah. The frozen one."

"No, that's Jason. He's in Alaska rescuing kangaroos, this cat named Beo, and a fish tree..."

Ryuga furrowed his brow. Hadn't he heard something like this before, on a video? He brushed it off. "Listen, kids. Keith is looking for his ferret. GO GET HIM, kay? He has chocolate."

"No he doesn't, Keith's vegetarian. He's also a eco-freako, my dad says."

"Okay, go get him, he has...carob." Ryuga knew enough about vegetarians from Mj's friend Jazzy. Jazzy didn't like to eat animals. She and Keith should start a club or something.

"Carob's nasty. My mum says it comes from these plants which always smell like rotten cucumber..."

"You're mum'th thmart, Kevin", Minny said reverently.

"She's the smartest planet in the world." And then Kevin and Minny wandered out the door.

At that moment, Mei-mei came back with Schroedinger. "Have fun with this one, Ryuga."

Ryuga loaded Schroedinger into the front seat beside him; he whined happily, smelling Mj in the upholstery. She'd ridden in this car enough to become a fixture.

About halfway down the road, Schroedinger decided to explore the backseat. And suddenly Ryuga heard a squeal. "Puppy!"

He pulled off on the side of the road, unbuckled hurriedly, and opened the back door. Kev and Minny were on the floor with Schroedinger.

"Hey Doctor Theuth Guy! We found your loht dog. Don't bite him. Kevin'th mum thayth it'th not very nithe."

"What are you doing in my car!?"

"Oh we thought it wath a magic Chaaar-iot and we were gone to Mex-i-co", the annoying kids sang.

Ryuga lifted them onto the seat and buckled them in, tying Schroedinger securely in beside him. Schroedinger was content to stick his head out the window and eat the wind.

As they pulled up in front of the kennel, Keith walked out with Einstein the ferret. Einstein smiled a ferret smile and Keith glared a very much human glare. As Ryuga unbuckled Kevin and Minny and walked them up to the sidewalk, Keith pulled out a random handbag and swatted Ryuga with it.

"CHILD THIEF!"

Like mother, like son, I always say...

And then he loaded Kev and Minny into his pickup truck along with Einstein, giving Ryuga the evil eye the whole time. After the doors were shut and the kids safely out of earshot, he got right up in Ryuga's face and said,

"You'll be hearing from my lawyer. NO, my MOTHER!"

And then he got in the car and drove away. It seemed that Ryuga was accursed to be ruined by little children for the remainder of his life.

# Good with kids

This lovely suggestion is from lovely nellabean!

Just so you know, she is EPIC.

Bad ending, I know. Filled with Ryuga/Tsubasa brotherly annoyingness and also doctors. The best way to put kids to bed.

---

Mj stuck her head through the garage door. "Hey."

Ryuga grunted in response, wanting her out of his safe haven. Although rather dusty, it was the only place he could escape from the chaos called Home.

"Will you please help me with something?"

"If it involves little kids, doctors, vets, grocery stores, dragons, or the world in general, I'm not interested."

"Too bad for you. I really need you to do something for me."

"What is it this time, Em?" Ryuga sighed and looked up from his laptop. It seemed there would be no peace this night.

"I reeeeeeeeeeealllllly need you to help me put the little kids to bed."

"No." He turned back to the laptop, where he was secretly reading fanfiction to see what bad things people thought about him.

"But Ryuuuuuuchan..."

"Don't EVER call me that. EVER."

Mj grinned. You could practically see the lightbulb above her head, neon-coloured and probably shaped like a giraffe or something. (Nobody knew where she got those lightbulbs, only that they showed up in random places and usually broke if you hit them/dropped them hard enough.)

"I'm gonna call you that for the REST of your LIFE if you don't do it."

Truthfully, Ryuga like the nickname a bit, only from certain people of course. Not from Kyouya or anybody. But he knew that Mj would eventually figure that out and set everybody on his tail; she knew how to figure out weaknesses. And so he consented for the preservation of sanity and windows.

Because windows were rather important and also epic.

"What exactly do you need me to do?"

Mj brightened. "Well Kyouya needs me to pick him up from somewhere and I knew you needed a break from driving places, so I need you to just make sure they brush their teeth and stuff."

It didn't sound too hard. But Ryuga didn't want to do it. "I think I'd rather pick Kyouya up."

"By pick him up I meant actually physically lift his dying carcass off the ground. He got in a fight again."

"Oh."

"Yeah. And it's not, like, 13 children and a psychotic dog, like last time. Pleeeeeeeease?"

"Well which of the kids are here tonight?" The cycle of children at Mj's house regularly came and went.

"Jonah, Mikey, Kenta, Yu, and Evelin." Evelin was Mj's friend's sister.

"Oh. Ok. I guess it won't be so bad. But don't expect this regularly", he grumbled.

"I know, I know. I'm leaving now."

"Ok, have fun."

Briefly he wondered how she would lift the carcass of Kyouya, which was almost twice her size. But then, this was the girl who had managed to conjure 5 dragons and random giraffe-shaped lightbulbs out of nowhere. He wouldn't be surprised if Kyouya arrived home on a unicorn-drawn gurney.

With a sigh, and after finishing up another fic by his anti-fangirls, he decided fate would come for him eventually and he might as well face it.

Taking a deep breath and steeling himself for certain doom, he walked into the living room.

Jonah and Evelin looked up from their game. Yu and Mikey never turned their heads from the TV. And Kenta was reading a book.

Maybe this wouldn't be so bad after all?

No. No, this would be bad. Just at the moment you were about to SQUEE because they were so cuddly and ADORABLE, they bit you. Hard. On the shin. ON the SHIN!

But Ryuga felt no children-teeth embedded in his lower leg region. And so he cautiously continued into the living room, conscious that at any moment these little tiny adorablz could turn him into ancient history.

He wandered into the kitchen, one eye constantly on the board game continuing in the living room, and checked the time. 9:24. The children were usually in bed by 9:30, and if they weren't in bed during that general timeframe...

Mj would KNOW.

She always knew. Her evil dragon spies would tell her in the night, and then murder them all, in the night. And then laugh over their graves.

Also in the night.

And on that cheery note, he headed back into the living room. "Hey you guys, Mj said I need to put you to bed, so, uh...go do bedtime stuff."

"Can we pleeeeeease stay up a little longer?" begged Evelin.

"No, Mj will...KNOW. With her magic."

Evelin shivered and hurried to get in her pyjamas.

"Can we at least have milk before bed?" Jonah, always perky.

"Uh, I guess, do you usually?"

"Yes. It helps little kids sleep", Kenta explained.

"Then...it counts as getting ready for bed. Just be fast."



"Yaaay!" Jonah hurried into the kitchen. Of course then there was the matter of which cup everybody wanted. Because it tastes better in the ultra-shiny one.

Ryuga pushed the cup off-limits and gave everyone the same red plastic solo cups that Mj's parents always kept around.

"Ryuga, you can't microwave stuff in these, I don't think", Kenta said worriedly.

"Naah. I bet it'll be fine." Ryuga popped the cup in the microwave and punched 50 seconds into the dialboard.

All was well up until the 3rd second. Then it exploded. (Now I know cups don't technically do this but Ryuga just seems not to be that lucky, no?)

Evelin hid behind Yu, who tried to hide behind HER. Mikey squealed in terror and Kenta, Jonah, and Ryuga stared in dismay at the charred mess of exploded milk and plastic.

"Ryuga...*she'll know*" whispered Jonah hauntingly.

Ryuga snapped back to normal and grabbed a towel. "Drink your milk cold. I'll clean this up."

Kenta and Jonah obediently began pouring cups of milk for the younger children and Ryuga scooped the entire mess into a towel and tossed the whole thing in the trash.

He felt proud of himself as he surveyed the not-so-messy microwave; he was a good babysitter.

As one by one the kids lined up and threw their cups in the trash, he thought what to do next. "Okay, now go brush your teeth. That's what you do, right?" He looked to Kenta, by far one of the most mature of them, for guidance. But Kenta was playing with the dog.

"Okay, then, I guess that's that."

Jonah, Evelin, Yu, Mikey, and Kenta (who took some bodily force to be separated from the adorable dog) filed into the bathroom obediently. Ryuga, bored, wandered around in the background until everyone was done. Then Evelin approached him with a hairbrush.

"Mister Ryuga, could you please brush my hair for me?"

Evelin spoke with a rather adorable lisp, and always seemed to cut straight to the point. At a loss as to how to say no, Ryuga tentatively took the hairbrush and Evelin turned around. Then he realised he was holding the wrong end of it. WHY COULDN'T THERE BE A GIRL HERE!?

Then he was struck with an idea. More like slapped. Slapped with an idea. He hurried back to Mj's parents' room, where Tsubasa was watching TV to escape the late-night noise.

"Help me with this." He shoved the brush into Tsubasa's hands.

Tsubasa looked down perplexedly. "You don't have enough hair for this."

"No, I mean the little girl in the bathroom..."

"Evelin?"

"Yes."

"Okay." Tsubasa hopped off the bed and into the bathroom. Kenta put one hand over his mouth, giving Ryuga a look that said, "Seriously?"

Ryuga glared back at Kenta and shooed the little boys into the bedroom to settle down. Then he turned his attention back to Tsubasa and the little girl. "What are you doing?"

"I'm braiding it so it doesn't get tangled."

"It doesn't look like it wants to be braided."

"That's how it's supposed to look."

"You're crazy."

"At least he knows which end of the hairbrush is up, mister", Evelin lisped sassily.

Ryuga decided to ignore the fact that, not only did Tsubasa know how to braid hair, but he also knew where and what bobby pins and ponytail holders were for, and how to use them.

Evelin flounced into Grace's bedroom, which she would be taking over for the night.

Ryuga walked into the boys' room to make sure they were in bed.

"Hey. Are you all asleep already?"

A chorus of "Yes, Ryuga", came from the sleeping bags and beds scattered around the room. He flipped on the light and glared at the faces of the little boys. "Don't lie to me. I WILL ALWAYS KNOW."

Yu sat up fast. "Are you an authoress, just like Mj?"

Ryuga glared at him. "Shh, no, Yu", Mikey said softly. "Everyone knows he's a doctor."

"No I'm not. And for that, the world thanks me."

"You say that every day."

Suddenly Evelin screamed from her room. "I BROKE MY LEG!" Ryuga whipped out a random first aid kit and the occupants of both rooms burst out laughing. He aimed the first aid kit into the darkness beside Evelin's bed and Tsubasa sat up, complaining.

"He told me to do it", Evelin said, pointing at Tsubasa.

"I know. That's why I threw the first aid kit at his head. IT'S NOT MINE, by the way."

Jonah came over and tugged on Ryuga's jacket. "How much stuff you got in there anyhow?"

"Yeah, Ryuga, Luis said you had like 5 cinder blocks under there on your birthday of all days."

"Thank you, Kenta, that's very observant. Now will you all please go to sleep!?"

"Mister Ryuga, will you read us a bedtime story? Pleeeeease?" Evelin whined.

Now Ryuga would read angry fics. He would smash giraffe shaped lightbulbs. He would protect the chivalry of windows, explode milk, and ask his friend to brush

little girls' hair. But this was going a bit too far.

"I think not."

But all the children clustered around him with books. "You're the best at reading! You can do the evil villain voice the best! Come on, pleeeeeease?"

"NO." Ryuga gently plopped the kids, one by one, back on their assorted bedding materials.

"But whyy?"

"Because those are little-kid books. I hate little-kid books."

"Then read us your book, Mister Ryuga", said Evelin. "Your book isn't for little kids."

Ryuga thought back to the leather-bound murder mystery/alien abduction book in his bedroom. "No. I don't want to have to deal with you kept up all night because you think Roy Doniger is going to eat you and turn you into his evil army."

"Then make us up a story. You're a good little authoress-man, like Mj", Yu said.

"I'm not an...authoress-man." Tsubasa snickered at Ryuga's lame reply, then disappeared obligingly to his bedroom at Ryuga's frown.

"And no. It's time for you to go to sleep."

"But we always have a story. It counts as getting ready for bed, Ryuga", Kenta said, speaking for those younger than him.

Ryuga looked around at the little faces of the children, Evelin's especially close and teary-eyed.

"All right, fine. But only if you go to sleep right afterwards."

"Promise."

"Okay, uh." He settled in the centre of the boys' room with a lamp, as Evelin settled down on the floor nearby. "Once upon a time..."

"Oh, come on, that's way overused", Tsubasa called obnoxiously from upstairs.

"FINE", he yelled back at the long-haired boy. "SO there was this...guy. And he had a son. And that son had these superpowers, right?"

"And a sister", Evelin said.

"Okay. A sister too. Don't interrupt me. And...the boy...got eaten. By a genie. Yes, it was huge, Yu. And it was blond. And so the genie had indigestion for days afterwards.

"But that's not the point. The girl was very mad that her brother was genie chow and she decided to SLAY HIM."

"Was the girl you?"

"KENTA, do I look like a girl!?"

"Don't ask that question", Jonah said quickly.

"Now, hold on just a second. I don't look like...nevermind. And the girl was also a princess."

The boys groaned. "Okay, a NINJA princess."

"Yayayayay!"

"And she had the power of...evil...purple things. Which come to strangle you in the night. And the genie got strangled and the girl had her revenge. And then the genie melted, and then there was her brother on the bed where he had been. Alive!"

Ryuga said this as he smacked his palms together loudly, causing Evelin to scream.

"And they went back home and saved the world, numerous times. And you know who they are now and where they are?"

"Where are they?" Mikey leaned eagerly across his bed.

"I have no earthly idea. But they did save Tsubasa from the hateful princess of melons one time."

Everybody laughed. He could almost feel Tsubasa stomping across the stairs right now.

Tsubasa thrust his head into the room. "WHY ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT ME!"

"Shh, you'll scare them."

"I do NOT need to be saved by an evil genie and her princess brother from a MELON QUEEN."

"No, you see what happened was - nevermind. Go away. It's bedtime." Ryuga smugly pushed Tsubasa out of the room and sent Evelin back to her own bed.

"Good night, Ryuga", everybody said.

"Yeah, whatever. Look out for the princess's brother ninja. He's evil."

And then Ryuga went back to his garage, just as Mj showed up again with her car full of half-dead Kyouya. "So how'd it go?"

"It was horrible", Ryuga grumbled. "I'm never babysitting again."

"Oh, you had fun, didn't you. You're wearing your happy socks."

Ryuga looked down at his cotton-clad feet. "Nuh-uh."

"Well, you had fun, anyway. I know", she said mysteriously as a little dragon curled around her neck, whispering the events of the night into her ear. Ryuga shivered and locked the garage door as she left. That girl, with all her neon animal lightbulbs and unicorn-drawn gurneys, was the creepiest one he'd ever met.

# Why we don't ask our friends to dinner

Thanks to the inspiration of what happens to me in actual life, and also the suggestions from you epic people out there in the internet-land, I'm saved from total doom! If I meet my quota this week for Smiling Through a Monday, I can start working on other stories! Yay! Thank you,

nellabeau

SabrinaNotscha

FlameSolaria

TheAlmightyFireHawk

JuniperGentle

GalaxyPegasus14

BBoyVengeance

For your inspiration and encouragement!

And any of the other people, please send in suggestions if you have any that you're not using!

---

Nile flinched as a crash came from the bathroom. He was sitting at the kitchen table, obscured by heaping plates of food, waiting for the others to arrive.

Mj had decided that they needed to have a Family Dinner tonight; it was something her parents liked, and even in their absence, like parents like daughter. And so she had requested the presence of Everybody at the dinner table tonight.

Normally she would have been happy with everyone floating in and out, grabbing what they wanted from the fridge over the evening whenever they pleased. Wandering out to the garage or living room, watching TV and working on projects as they ate at no given time whatsoever.

But everyone had come to terms with Mj's many multiple personalities. According

to her parents, she had a mild case of Dissociative Identity Disorder, but everyone knew it was because of her Wild Authoress Half-fried brain. So when she did something wacky or out of the ordinary from her current stream of things, it didn't faze anyone much anymore.

Nile tuned in lazily to the conversation floating from the source of the crash - the bathroom.

"I was here first!"

"Yeah, but I turned on the water!"

"So what? You guys, let me through!"

"Move over, Kyouya! Why do you have to be so fat?"

"I'm not fat!"

"BEEE QUIEEET!" This was Ryuga. The three occupants of the kitchen - Mj, Tsubasa, and Nile - practically jumped through the roof.

"YOU BE QUIET!" Mj yelled back into the bathroom.

"DON'T YELL AT ME!"

"YOU DON'T YELL AT ME!"

"GET YOUR HANDS WASHED AND COME OUT HERE!"

Ryuga stomped out of the bathroom. "I WOULD have my hands washed if these WEIRDOS hadn't got in the way!"

"Use the other bathroom. What in the land of Gravy - "

"I never signed up for this", Ryuga mumbled, and stormed off in the other direction.

"Well that's off to a good start", Tsubasa commented.

"I don't need your input."

"Anyway", Nile said softly.



Tsubasa shrieked and fell off the stepstool he was standing on. Mj nearly burned herself on a hot pot of something-ness.

"Nile!", she gasped. "I had no idea you were back there. Come out here before somebody dies."

Nile came out from behind the plate of food. "Sorry, you guys."

"Come pick up Tsubasa. He's about to have a seizure." Nile helped Tsubasa up off the floor and Mj turned to tend to the pot of something-ness. (She was horrible at cooking, but everyone was secretly hoping that with Tsubasa's supervision the food would be edible.)

Finally Ryuga finished obsessively washing his hands and slouched down in a seat at the table. "Ryuga, you should really come here and take a look at Tsubasa, I think he broke a toe or something falling off the stepstool."

"Why me?"

Mj gave him a quizzical look. "I thought you were a doctor."

"WHY DOES EVERYONE THINK THAT."

"Owww."

"Nile, help him sit down. AGH! I think I burned it."

"Get outta the kitchen." Madoka came and shooed Mj away.

Mj took a seat at the table as Benkei came in, lagging behind Kyouya like a lost dog. They both found seats. "Question."

"Yes, Kyouya."

"How are we all supposed to fit here?"

"By...magic."

"Okay. I have FAITH IN YOU", Kyouya said, dramatically flinging an arm in the direction of the chandelier, his eyes shining with stage dramaticism.

"Ugh. Somebody find me the sedatives."

"At least he's in a good mood", Nile commented, as Kyouya glared his way.

"I meant for me. To save me from the misery of his acting."

"Hey, I'm not that bad."

"No, you're not. You're just overdramatic."

Kyouya fell to his knees on the ground. "Whyyy..." then he fake-died. Benkei applauded loudly and Mj rolled her eyes. "YU! DID YOU GIVE HIM CHOCOLATE AGAIN!"

Yu emerged from the bathroom, drying his hands on his jacket. "No."

"Go back there and finish washing the soap off your hands."

Yu returned to the bathroom as Madoka rested the pot of soup precariously in the centre of the table, and Mj attempted to fit plates around the edges.

As the rest of the crew filed out of the bathroom, Mj slid into a seat with a sigh. "You have no idea how much it takes to feed all you people."

"I don't care, I'm starving!"

"Thanks for the enthusiasm, Gingka."

Everyone started serving themselves food. At some point Masamune pushed Kyouya out of his chair. Pretty strange considering the difference in body weight.

"OOOGH...ALL THE LIGHHHTS ARE GOING OUUUUT..."

Kyouya lay on the floor, raising a dying arm to the sky.

"Benkei...say goodbye to Mousie for me..." here he referred to his precious cat.

"I will, Kyouya", Benkei said, practically sobbing.

"Kyouya, get in your chair and eat your food."

"You have no sympathy for one...who is dying..." Kyouya rolled his eyes back in his head. Mj copied his action, but for a totally different reason.

"Goodbye...cruel...world..." And then he cracked his head back on the tile floor with a shudder.

Mj shook her head. "Good riddance."

Kyouya climbed laboriously back into his chair. Masamune said, "Phew", happy that Kyouya had pretended to die rather than pummeling Masamune himself.

"Will you please pass the ketchup?" Gingka, who had been mercifully silent up til now, was back in action.

"Yes. Here." Mj handed it to him. Gingka took the bottle thankfully and turned it upside down over his plate, then passed it to the person next to him, all around the table.

When it circled back to Gingka, he took it again. "Gingka, I thought you got ketchup already."

"Yeah, but. I need more." He turned it upside down once more, but nothing came out. He shook it. He squeezed it harder. Then he got up, went to the vacant living room, and danced around like crazy. But nothing happened.

Panting heavily, he returned to his chair and peered inside the now-open bottle. Then the ketchup decided to spill its guts all over his face.

And the person next to him. And the person next to HIM. And...all the food on the table. Except the pudding, mercifully.

Kyouya clapped his hands to his chest and toppled backward, the front of his shirt covered in ketchup.

"How many times are you going to die tonight, Kyouya?"

"HE'S DEAD. SOMEBODY GET AN AMBULANCE", Benkei roared. Kyouya sat up and Mj shook her head.

"Pass the rolls, please."

Tsubasa grabbed a roll and held it out to Benkei, who accidentally sent it flying with a giant paw into Nile's face.

"Why does stuff like that keep happening? This isn't an ammo-fest, you guys",

Ryuga muttered.

"People are just very clumsy", Luis philosophized. "I'm done. I need to go work on the fence."

"Hold on a second, you didn't eat dessert."

"I don't want dessert, the calories don't like my figure", Luis said vainly.

"Drama queen."

"III am the drama queen at THIS table", Kyouya said loudly. Everybody ignored him.

"It's drama KING, to you, Mj."

"There's no such thing. You're either a queen, or you're not."

"I'm not."

"You very much are."

"Say what you will. But I shall remain...EPIC-LOOKING." So saying, Luis returned to his beloved fence.

Mj would shake her head so many times it would fall off eventually. Of this Nile was sure.

Yu was having trouble reaching his plate. Nobody had noticed that a telephone book or two might be helpful. Just as nobody noticed when he grabbed his plate with a valiant effort and went for a picnic with Kenta beneath the table.

As one by one they finished their food and returned to the lives which they called "normal" - Masamune to the treehouse he was building, Ryuga to moping around and being dragon-y, and Benkei to wandering around listlessly in Kyouya's absence, Mj sighed with relief. The only ones left at (or under) the table, were herself, Kyouya, Nile, Kenta, and Tsubasa (who was rather banished there because of his fatal stepstool injuries).

Mj told Nile to take care of Tsubasa, and Kyouya to take care of the dishes. Then she switched their duties, thinking that she'd rather have a rather miffed Tsubasa than 65 broken glasses.

Kyouya knelt in front of Tsubasa, who gasped in pain when he touched him. "Oh, please, Tsubasa. You're such a drama queen."

Mj risked another head shake and started putting the food away, at which point Kenta emerged from beneath the table.

"Oh, Kenta! What were you doing down there?"

"Having a picnic, with Yu."

"Oh...why?"

"We couldn't reach the table. We're too short."

"You're chibi, that's all."

"I have no idea what that is."

"Go give Nile your plate to wash."

Afterwards, Mj decided family dinners that included such crazy guests were overrated.

# More caffeine than necessary

Hey there all. It's a normal day.

Well, now it's a normal day. We finally got that guy to settle down.

Okay, allow me to backpedal a moment. This is Braelinn, a girl who's never showed up here before. My sister was Evelin, from Tuesday. The adorable one.

Anyway I'm a friend of Majour's, and I'm taking over for today because, frankly, she'd out of commission for the time being. I'll explain it.

So I was sitting at the table for breakfast, because I get up REAL early. Cause I'm a light sleeper, and when my dad gets up I wake up and he leaves for work early so I was used to waking up early. And Mj was in the kitchen. Mostly I just call her Mal cause that's what we called her a long time ago when we were little before she was MajourOrtho.

So Mal was getting breakfast for me cause we were the only ones up. It was her dragon that woke her up, Zintos, because he heard a rat on the window. (I hate rats.)

And while I was starting up on this bowl of cereal that Mal always has around, the chocolate kind, the cereal I mean, not the bowl - this guy walked in. I don't really see Mal's friends much because I was at school. But it was an off day. He had long hair like a girl, really I almost thought he was a girl at first. And I always forget his name. That day I was trying to pronounce it cause it's Chinese or something. But now I know his name but it's hard to spell. So I'm gonna call him Tsu-chan for today cause that's what Mal sometimes calls him.

So he walked in and he was tired, and Mamoo, I mean Masamu...MAS...A...MU...NE (I hate Chinese) had just got up and he was in the kitchen looking at the coffee pot. And Tsu-chan said to him to get out of the way because he needed coffee.

But Mas...a...mune said, no he was busy with it. And then Tsu-chan says he will slap him. So Mal said maybe he should just sit down and she will get him some coffee.

So Tsu-chan sat down on a chair. And he gave me this look, like "I hate you", and

all and stuff. So I just looked at my cereal and thought, I don't know why Mal has so many weird friends. Or why they say she's a genius. She's insane.

So she wasn't watching, and she got his coffee and turned her back on...Moo. I'll call him that now. Which you should never do. Leave him alone, I mean, not call him names.

So Moo grabbed this box out of his hoodie and dumped it in the coffee. And then he walked away. I went after him. And I asked him what he put in the coffee, and he said, "if Tsubasa needs coffee to wake him up they will just help him be happy."

But when he left he dropped the empty box on the ground and it was for caffeine pills.

---

Hey, it's Mal again, everyone. She decided to come back because Braelinn was tired of typing.

Mal surveyed the table as more of the kids filed in and ate breakfast. Sora was the last one up; she was one of Tsubasa's canon sisters that Arrowhead1996 had sent over for a visit.

"You look kind of jittery, bro", she said to Tsubasa in concern.

"N-no. I'm f-fine."

"Okay. Well...just, ok." Sora didn't quite know what to make of this. She decided Tsubasa was taking after Mal and thought maybe she should try to convince him to move back home.

Tsubasa hopped up from the table suddenly. "Gottagobye!" then he got in his van with his pyjamas still on and drove to work.

Mal stared after him through the window, as if she could see a trail of doom behind him. Something was terribly wrong, but she didn't quite know just what...

A few minutes later, her cell phone rang.

"Hello? Yes, yes this is Mal...I see. Really?" Unmistakable surprise took over her voice as she fumbled with the phone. "That's highly unusual..."

You're highly unusual, Mal.

"Yes, send him home. He's probably stressed."

She hung up, then slammed the phone down on the table, whirling instantly on Masamune. "WHAT DID YOU DO?"

Masamune cringed. "I...I didn't do anything. I promise."

"You're lying, Masamune."

"No."

"Yes! Braelinn." Braelinn jumped as Mal whirled on her.

"What did Masamune do to Tsubasa?"

"I...he put caffeine pills in his coffee."

"MASAMUNE!"

Masamune shrieked and fled the house. Sora made a note to never get on Mal's bad side.

A few minutes later Mal heard a crash. She raced outside to find the trash can knocked over and Tsubasa jumping through the window of his own van.

"Tsubachan. Get ahold of yourself." She grabbed his shoulders. "Sit down and cool off!"

Tsubasa tried. He really did. It was a valiant effort. A totally valiant, two-second effort. Finally he jumped off the couch. "WHAT'S THAT!?"

Mal whirled. "I don't see anything, Tsubasa. It's just your sister."

Sora crept away guiltily, having no desire to be turned into a magical lightbulb unicorn. Mal was famous for her magical lightbulb unicorns.

Braelinn left for school, a wise choice. Mal bent to pick up a box from the floor. Caffeine pills. And it was completely empty.

"Oh, no..."



Tsubasa was jouncing up and down on the balls of his feet agitatedly. "I-I don't know what's wrong with me, Mal...I can't think straight..."

"I know, I know. It was Masamune. He overcaffeinated you."

"Wh-what? Is that an elephant you say?"

"No, Tsubasa. Sit down."

"I c-can't."

"Stop bouncing, you're going to break something!"

"Sorry."

"It's not your fault. Go in the kitchen while I think. Good, now come back. Oh, you're fast. GO back in the kitchen. You know what, just run back and forth for a minute so I don't have to keep talking."

Tsubasa made a total of 396, 700 circuits between the kitchen and Mal's bedroom in the next 5 minutes.

"STOP!" Mal grabbed his jacket. "I can't think with you whizzing around like that! SORA!"

Sora quickly came in the room. "Yeah?"

"Will you find him something to do for the next half hour or so without letting him cause a global crisis?"

"I...guess."

You're a global crisis, Mal.

Sora watched helplessly as Tsubasa zipped around the yard, building little towers with the cinder blocks Mal's brothers had, and wrecking them, and then hanging them from trees, and kicking them around, and very nearly throwing one through a window until Sora crashed through it with her beyblade to save Mal's house from disaster.

"Tsubasa! COME BACK HERE!" He was headed straight for the mailbox. Sora raced after him, standing breathless at the mailbox as he ran back into the house.

She caught up with him finally as he unstuffed the couch and restuffed it messily in a matter of seconds. She grabbed the rope from the counter (why did Mal keep that rope so handy?) and tied it around his waist with the expertise of a cowgirl with a lasso.

She followed him around for a while as he wandered agitatedly around the perimeters of the house and then into the little town near where Mal lived. As he entered the doughnut shop, Sora was only just thinking that maybe he shouldn't have that sugar.

He gasped in delight upon entering. "Doughnuts! I love doughnuts."

"NO doughnuts for you, hyper boy."

Sora attempted to pull him out of the shop with the rope, but he scrabbled wildly for the doughnut counter. "HELP ME WITH HIM!" she yelled at the boy behind the counter as she struggled to keep Tsubasa away from the ultimate sugar.

The poor traumatized counter boy would be scarred for life. He helped Sora haul the frantic Tsubasa out of the doughnut shop and locked the doors behind them. Sora suddenly let go of the rope and Tsubasa fell over onto his face with a gasp. Sora regained hold of the rope in case of another accident.

12 minutes later found Sora sitting, worn out, on the curb outside the post office with Tsubasa tied to a pole nearby, wandering aimlessly in circles. He'd eventually wind himself around the pole. Sora didn't want to think about that.

Back at the house, Mal shook her head and began stitching the poor dear couch back up.

Sora looked up as a red truck rumbled slowly past. She thought nothing of it. But Tsubasa gasped in fury. He yelled, "DON'T RUN OVER MY SISTER YOU FREAK!" he started chasing the car and ended up tearing the pole out of the sidewalk.

That was how Sora ended up running after a maniac with a pole trailing from his waist.

Suddenly the pole snagged against another pole; Sora's brother choked loudly and fell on the ground once more. She picked up the rope and led him home, locking him in the attic.

Mal was still busy sewing up the couch. She looked up when Sora entered. "Oh,

hey Sora! What'd you do with the Chicken Boy?"

"I locked him in your attic." Sora looked proud of herself. But Mal went white.

"You...really?"

"Yes?"

"I...Sora, the attic is my bedroom..." So saying, Mal raced upstairs and threw the door open.

Paper and pillowcases lay shredded around the room. "Nooo." Mal moaned in distress. But Tsubasa lay in a deep, sweet sleep in the centre of it all. Beside him a box of doughnuts Mal had had around.

"At least he's finished", Mal sighed in relief. She called Ryuga to help her move Tsubasa to the guest room whilst Masamune put the bedroom back together.

When she turned to Sora, Sora cringed, truly expecting certain doom as a unicorn. But Mal smiled. "Thanks for looking after him. It could've been a lot worse."

As she left the house to clear her head, Sora smiled to herself. Perhaps Mal wasn't so crazy after all.

---

Notes: Arrowhead1996 is credited fully with Sora Otori!

I would say, no counter boys were traumatized in the writing of this fic. But that'd be a lie. IF YOU'RE READING THIS, SORRY JOE.

Eh. Maybe he'll meet Damien in the mental hospital.

# Dumptruck Allie

Yaay! My first Tsubasa and Yu fanfic!

Suggestion from the epicly epic JuniperGentle. She is epic.

One more thing, I decided to add Mj's full name into the equation. It's Mallory. Some random thought that came to me the other day.

---

Tsubasa poked his head into the living room and looked around cautiously before opening the foyer door a little bit wider. Wide enough to let something small, brown, and fuzzy inside.

It was a dog.

Mj looked up from her computer; in all her authoressly silence, he had failed to notice her. Tsubasa jumped slightly.

"Oh, hi Mal." (Recently he'd taken to calling her by her full name, especially when he was nervous.)

"Hello, Tsubasa. What's that little dog you've got with you?"

"Listen, you can't tell anybody, Ok? If Yu finds out he'll be very angry. I told him he couldn't have a dog."

"I see how it is. We'll keep your secret." Metrion lifted her little head from Mal's shoulder and croaked.

Tsubasa looked sceptically at Mal and Metri. "Are you sure?"

"Yes, I'm sure. The puppy can stay in the garage, if you want", she offered. "What's his name?"

"It' a girl." Tsubasa lifted up the little dog. "Her name is Dumptruck."

"I love it."

"Thanks."

"Yeah, no problem. When it comes to puppies I can't say no."

And so Tsubasa put Dumptruck in the garage and locked it, since Ryuga often escaped there with a laptop and if he should find Dumptruck all would be lost.

---

a few hours later

---

"Mj?...where's the key to the garage?"

Mj, unbeknownst to the fact that the garage was to be left unopened, and thinking that Dumptruck had gone with Tsubasa to work, gave Yu the key to the garage. He unlocked the door and scampered inside, looking for Ryuga.

Instead, he found Dumptruck.

The poor dog was covered in paint, turned absolutely blue thanks to a fiasco with loose lids and rickety shelves. He hosed her off, though her fur remained turquoise, and sneaked back in through the garage.

Unfortunately, mysterious authors turn up in the strangest of places.

"Yu, you found a puppy!" Mj didn't recognise Dumptruck under her oddly-coloured coat. Yu jumped.

"Just don't tell Tsubasa."

"Okay. You can put her in the guest room for now, so long as she doesn't make a mess."

---

When Tsubasa returned home from work

---

Tsubasa unlocked the front door and let himself in, immediately exchanging the key for that of the garage door, eager to check up on Dumptruck. He found the garage open with no dog in sight.

Panicking, and certain that Yu would find her if he didn't, he raced outside and began to call her name.

Inside the house in Mal's guestroom, Dumptruck heard her name being called and scratched at the window frantically. Seeing Tsubasa look their way, Yu ducked under the windowsill hurriedly. Tsubasa pressed a palm against the window, wondering why on earth Dumptruck should have turned blue, and raced inside towards the guestroom.

Yu ran out of the room before Tsubasa rounded the corner and ran into the bathroom. Tsubasa lifted the ocean-coloured dog off the window ledge and sneaked her back to his van under his vest. Mal watched him curiously and then returned to her work.

---

Yu went back into the guestroom and found it devastatingly empty. The little blue dog, whom he had named Allie, was nowhere in sight. He was sure that Tsubasa had taken her to find where she really lived, and that he would eventually find from Mj that Yu had been hiding her from him.

He ran out into the front yard; Tsubasa's van was just pulling out of the driveway. He was headed to the dog pound, for sure.

Yu hopped on Mj's brother's bicycle and raced down the driveway, covered in an old play costume found in the garage so nobody could see him.

---

Tsubasa rolled down his car window at the Little Ceasar's drive-through window, picking up an order for Mal so they could all eat dinner. Dumptruck scampered across him to rub noses with the person at the window. Dumptruck sure loved windows.

"Hey, why's your dog blue?"

"I just came home and she was like that."

"Got a brother? I bet it was him."

Tsubasa contemplated this; no, it was impossible. Mal would have made sure that Yu didn't venture into the garage. But upon return home, he noticed a bucket of blue paint sitting open on the garage step, with more paint scattered around it and little shoes that belonged to Yu lying wet near the puddle. He ran inside and shooed Dumptruck into the guestroom, then went to find the little boy.

---

Yu ran back into the guestroom undetected to find Allie sitting, tired, on the bed. "Allie! Where have you been?" Then he realised she'd probably been under the bed the whole time. He fell asleep next to the puppy, buried beneath a wall of pillows and comforters.

Tsubasa walked back into the room to find Yu and Dumptruck on the bed. He covertly removed Dumptruck from Yu's grasp; he'd wake to find her gone, assume she'd run off, and forget about it. He never had to know she was Tsubasa's.

He left her under Mal's care for awhile, hoping she could scrub the dog clean. Mal surveyed the little puppy. Perhaps this was the same dog Yu had had? No. He wouldn't want Tsubasa to know. And Dumptruck had been clearly brown. There certainly were a lot of dogs around here today.

As Tsubasa drifted into the deepest of slumbers beside Yu, Dumptruck scampered away from Mal and into the guestroom. When Mal managed to locate her, she was already asleep between the two boys. She left her there. She would always claim the pup as hers when the time came.

---

Tsubasa blinked sleep from his eyes at the same time that Yu opened his own, crying out "Dumptruck!" At the same time that Yu called out "Allie!"

"MAL!"

Mal stuck her head into the room. "Oh, my dog! You found him!"

"Your dog is huge, and he's named Schroedinger", Yu pointed out.

"Okay, whose is he?"

"She's mine", both boys said at the same time, then stared at each other in astonishment.

"Okay, share her. She can be named Dumptruck", she added, looking at Tsubasa, "Since your other Dumptruck ran away." And then Mal walked out of the room. Tsubasa shrugged and Yu shrugged back. And so Dumptruck Allie, the blue dog, had found a home.

# Frying pans :3

Mj sort of graduated from "Mj" to "Mal" in the past few days, so that's what she'll be called from here on out.

Also, for those of you who like to read The Adventures of the Legendary RandomClan, the poster is up on my dA account!

chika365 . deviant art art / The-Legendary-Randomclan- 398538262

As usual, remove the spaces and have fune.

Okay. Now that that's done with.

I am going to TRY to write something funny. I AM MAKING A VALIANT EFFORT FOLKS!

But thanks to my new story, When it's in your hands, I'm in a sort of DARK mood right now. SO if this isn't funny, I won't post it. Which means you'll never read this. This chapter might utterly stink.

We'll see.

---

"Nile? What are you doing?"

Nile opened his eyes wearily. His cheek was pressed up against the fridge, where he'd been asleep for the past hour.

"Oogh. This is what you get for making me share a room with Kyouya", he croaked, stretching each limb in succession. "He's not a morning person."

"Believe me, I know", Mal said darkly, helping him up.

Nile shrieked as the self-same morning Kyouya came storming out of the hallway. Forgetting his stiff limbs, he ran uot the back door, slamming it behind him.

"Oh, good morning, Kyouya."

Kyouya whirled on her. "IS IT!? BECAUSE I DON'T THINK IT IS."



"I think it would be, if you weren't here SHOUTING ALL THE TIME", muttered Ryuga sullenly, rubbing his eyes as he emerged in a bathrobe from his bedroom.

"You're no sunshine yourself. Get out of the way."

"No, you."

"I WAS HERE FIRST!"

"Well, YOU GET TO BE FIRST ALL THE TIME!"

"Calm down, will you?"

"NO!" Both boys turned on poor Mallory with fury.

"Good gravy", she gasped, and stumbled out of the way.

"Ey, what's all the fuss about? I'm trying to sleep..." muttered Tsubasa as he entered the kitchen.

"Oh no, not you too", moaned Mal.

"Me too, what?"

"Nothing. Never mind. Get your coffee and get out of here before this place blows up."

"KYOUYA. GET OUT OF THE WAY."

Kyouya grabbed a frying pan off the counter. "MAKE ME!"

"OH, I'LL MAKE YOU ALL RIGHT..." Ryuga in turn took a large silver spoon and started trying to bash Kyouya over the head with it.

"Now I see what you mean", mumbled Tsubasa.

"DIE AT THE HANDS OF THIS SPOON!"

"SPOONS HAVE NO HANDS! YOU'RE ILLITERATE!"

"NO YOU ARE!"

"YOU ARE!"

"YOU!"

"I SAID IT FIRST!"

"NO, YOU SAID IT FIRST!"

"THAT'S WHAT I JUST SAID!"

"Wait, what did you say?" Ryuga lowered the spoon for a moment. Tsubasa took advantage of the moment to slip in to where his beloved coffee pot awaited him.

"I said, uh...I said I said it first."

"Oh. Said what first?"

"I DON'T KNOW, YOU'RE CONFUSING ME! LET ME IN THE KITCHEN NOW!"

"YOU!"

Kyouya swung the frying pan towards Ryuga's head. Mal squealed and ducked under the table.

The frying pan connected with a clang to Ryuga's headband. Luckily he remained unharmed and swept the spoon towards Kyouya's face, swinging too hard and letting go of it. It splashed into Tsubasa's coffee cup and doused the counter thoroughly. From beneath the table. Mal groaned and rested her head in her hands.

Tsubasa frowned and wiped up the coffee. Then he set to work making another pot; that had been the last of it.

"Guys, just calm down!" Mal begged.

"YOU'RE DEAD, TATEGAMI."

Ryuga grabbed plates and started throwing them at Kyouya. (luckily these were plastic.) Yu woke up, but quickly took refuge with Mal beneath the table.

"QUIT HURTING ME!" Kyouya grabbed the oranges off the table and flung them towards Ryuga, splattering hot water from the coffee-in-progress all over the floor. Tsubasa growled in frustration and returned to the sink.

Ryuga slapped Kyouya in the face. Kyouya smacked him in the head with a spatula. Ryuga cried out in pain and sunk to the ground. Kyouya raised the spatula high over his head, about to plunge it into Ryuga's heart...

"Wait, what on earth am I doing!?" he dropped the spatula. "That was incredibly idiotic", he mumbled. "I'm going back to bed."

Mal ventured out from under the table and Yu started picking up the oranges. Ryuga growled something under his breath, grabbed Tsubasa's cup of coffee, and stomped away.

And that's how it goes with not-morning-people.

# Ryuga-san and the evil cousins of horror

OOookay. Sorry for late chapter. My muse is on its last legs. I SWEAR, Kyouya stole it and DID SOMETHING TO IT and now it's all GLOOMY AND VIOLENT just like him and I CAN'T WRITE ANYTHING FUNNY...

GRRRRR...

---

"Ooooh my goodness..." Mal collapsed on the couch after walking in the door. Trudging, more like trudging through the door.

"Why are you tired, Mallu-chan?" asked Yu, running through the living room.

"Because they brought in 60 homeless dogs to the shelter today and EVERY SINGLE ONE needed a bath", answered Mal, "And now I have to babysit my cousin and his friend who are coming today."

"Tsubasa can do it for you", Yu suggested.

"Yeah sure", Tsubasa said, walking through the hallway. "I'll watch your cousins. Go to bed, you never get enough rest anyway."

Tsubasa watched as a grey sedan pulled up on the driveway, and dragged Ryuga outside to help him with the cousins.

The door opened and Kevin stepped out...

"NO. NO WORST NIGHTMARE EVER -" Ryuga attempted to crawl back inside but Tsubasa grabbed him by the head and swung him around. "Say hi to Kevin", said Tsubasa with a grin.

"YOU'RE THE CHILD STEALER MAN", yelled Keith from the front seat.

"Relax, he's a friend of Mal's."

"DO NOT let him doctor my child", said Kevin's mother. "That man is messed up."

"Don't worry ma'am. I am teaching him a lesson in proper childcare today."

"TSUBASA, you are EVIL", snarled Ryuga.

Mrs. Hallmark gave Ryuga a withering look and drove away.

Kevin immediately climbed on Ryuga's back and demanded a HORSEY RIDE. Ryuga grabbed Kevin by the back of the neck and put him down. "No horsey rides."

"But Keith always gives me Horsey Rides! And you're the best doctor in the world."

"I'm not a doctor, kid." Kevin trailed behind him as he walked inside.

"Quit following me."

"Quit following me."

"Kevin, STOP that."

"Kevin, STOP that!"

Ryuga glared at Kevin and stalked into the bathroom. Nobody could follow him there. Nobody except...Kevin...

Ryuga sat down against the bathtub and Kevin climbed in the window behind him.

"Are you gonna give me a bath?"

Ryuga shrieked and jumped up.

"KEVIN!"

"Yes, sir, yes, sir", said Kevin, saluting all wrong.

"Go away and quit ruining my life."

"Cousin Mal says you like little kids."

"NO."

"Whyyy?" Kevin grabbed hold of his hand and tugged on it. "Pleeeeeeeeeeeeeeease be my friiiiiiiiiend...and I will like you foreeeeeeeeeever..."

"You like me too much already."

"That's because you're my brother!"

"No I'm not, Kevin." Ryuga carefully removed the child from his arm and left the bathroom.

Kevin grabbed a stuffed animal and waved it at Ryuga. "Doctor man, I found a pet lizard!"

"LET GO OF MY DOLL", snapped Ryuga, grabbing the lizard from Kevin, and stomping into his bedroom, embarrassed that such a young hooligan would have discovered his greatest secret. Only Mal knew about it because she had bought it for him.

Kevin followed him and started messing around with the posters on the wall.

"Is there a secret top-secret super-secret little compartment back here?"

Ryuga blanched. Kevin was magical, he was certain.

"Don't touch that, it has my stuff inside of it." He pushed Kevin out the door and locked it.

Meanwhile on the other side of the house...

"Please get down from there", Tsubasa said, lifting Minny off the cabinet in the kitchen where the most breakable of all dishes were stores.

"But I wanna see."

"See what?" He answered patiently.

"The lady-bug. There's one on the top of the cabinet."

Tsubasa peered over the wooden rim and gasped.

"That's not a lady-bug..." A little tiny gecko flicked its tongue out at him.

"I wonder how that got in the house." He tried to catch it, but the gecko was too fast. Minny squealed as it leapt from the cabinet-top to the pots and pans hanging from the overhead rack. Tsubasa could barely reach it.

The gecko scampered over onto the countertop and Tsubasa lunged for it, and wound up falling hard onto the floor...with no gecko. The lizard ran under the fridge.

Tsubasa peered under the deep darkness of the dreaded fridge-bottom and found only lint and lost pennies in his line of sight; the lizard was not coming out.

Briefly he considered the vacuum cleaner but didn't think Mallory would be pleased with that.

"Did you find the lady-bug?" Minny was standing over him with a hopeful look on her face.

He sighed wearily. "No, Minny, I did not find the lady-bug."

"Can I watch TV?"

"No. Just...sit down for a sec, ok?"

"Ok."

Tsubasa stood up with a soft groan. Floors do not like to be nice to your ribs.

"I'm hungry."

Minny had not sat down as Tsubasa told her to, but was climbing up onto the counter where the bananas were. Alarmed, Tsubasa grabbed her and set her on the floor.

"Here." He put the banana in her hands. "Stop climbing on stuff, would you?"

"Okay."

Minny ate the banana quietly. But when Tsubasa turned his back on her for five minutes, he returned to an empty kitchen. No Minny.

And back to the other side of the house.

Ryuga sat down on the bed, happy to finally have some peace and quiet. But when he looked out the window, to where he had a clear view of the swimming pool, he saw what he had hoped to never ever see.

Kevin was traipsing around the edge of the swimming pool, with a little red ball

he'd got from somewhere, and accidentally dropped it in the water.

The wind pushed it out towards the centre of the pool, and he leaned over the edge trying to reach it. Ryuga threw open his bedroom door and raced outside just as the little blond-haired boy fell in the pool.

Ryuga gasped in horror as Kevin flailed in the water, panicking. He threw off his jacket and dove into the pool, swimming across to the other side where Kevin was about to go under.

Holding Kevin up with one arm, he grabbed the edge of the pool with the other...man that kid was heavy...and found Minny staring down at him.

She crouched at the edge of the swimming pool. "Why you in the pool, Ryuga? Did you see a lady-bug?"

"No, now move out of the way do I can get out."

"I want to swim too."

"NO MINNY NO - "

But Minny had climbed into the water already. Tsubasa, who had just appeared out of nowhere, grabbed her by the arm to prevent her from sinking, as Ryuga tried to climb out of the pool with Kevin. Kevin scrambled up onto shore and yelled, "HI TSUBASA!" In Tsubasa's ear. With a shriek, he fell into the water.

Ryuga shooed Kevin away from the water's edge and sank, panting heavily, onto the hot concrete surrounding the pool.

Tsubasa surfaced with Minny and climbed onto shore, rolling over with a gasp, not even attempting to stand up as Minny and Kevin chased the poor dog around the pool. Then, to save his own skin, Schroedinger jumped in the pool, sending up a wave.

Ryuga flinched as he was covered with cold chlorinated water, and sighed wearily as he leaned back on his hands.

Tsubasa finally stood up and grabbed a bunch of towels from the rack nearby, throwing one at Ryuga and then rubbing his face with one heartily. Ryuga tossed one in Kevin's direction and Tsubasa threw one over Minny's head, and then they herded the kids back inside to see if they could find them any dry clothes.



And just as they did so, Mallory came down the stairs.

"Oh hey you guys, are you - RYUGA! WHY ARE YOU ALL WET!"

"It's a long story."

"Ryuga-chan saw a lady-bug", Minny said dutifully.

"Did he now. Well, Ryuga's not very good at staying dry, is he. Oh, Tsubasa, not you too...you guys give me a headache."

Tsubasa rolled his eyes as Mal hoisted the kids up on under each arm and climbed up the stairs.

If only she knew just how much of a headache they could cause.

# News-of-the-day

Hey everyone. Before I get to the regular news of the day, I want to thank a bunch of special folks. I've been on this site for 8 months and interacted with many wonderful friends. I assure you, my life has changed because of all of you.

Thank you:

georgeisthewin: for my first favourite.

FearlessDragoness: for promising to always review.

candelight: for being inspiring.

Tailsmoforever: For putting up with me.

CureAnimeLover: For being a friend.

movielover121796: For faving my stuff.

love freak 666 and mamoruXD: For liking my Artemis Fowl stuff.

Arrowhead1996: For being super-nice and encouraging, and letting me use her OC.

Dark Shdows98: For loving our Flamey so much and taking care of her.

FlameSolaria99: For being sweet, funny, and friendly.

Jesusfreak93: For always sending in letters.

TaiNotscha: For her epic suggestions.

TheAlmightyFireHawk: For letting me inspire her.

PhantusDragon: For sending in letters and inspiration.

KyoyaXSandra: For letting me steal her idea.

Butterfly Knight and FleetingButterfly: For the letters to the crew.

queenofbeyblade: For her letters, too.

babybluestar: For entering my contest.

GalaxyPegasus14: For all her letters and support.

Tiger demon of light: For being sweet and inspiring.

cutiepie2013: For helping us spread the news about SOPA.

Nikkinooneko: For being funny.

Music Master355: For entering the quiz.

Little miss BANANAHEAD: For being inspiring.

Extra-special thanks go to:

nellabean: For super-super encouragement, inspiration, and always reviewing. For being sweet and teaching me things.

Luis, aka BBoyVengeance: For being the best pretend-big-brother out there. You're epic.

Zayne, aka FlyBoy: For being a best friend and putting up with all the crazy.

Matt, aka Rebel02: For being an understanding younger brother and trying his hardest.

Finally we come to the news-of-the-day:

Smiling through a Monday is going on hiatus.

I'm sorry. I just can't concentrate. I don't have any funny juice in me, not enough to keep this up. IT IS NOT OVER, it will start again soon, I just need a break. I need to concentrate on When it's in your hands, because until it's finished, nothing's getting done. I can tell.

Please bear with me, and I'll be back soon.

Love from Malluchan

# Prelude to evil (for Phantus's contest)

Oh. My. Goodness.

I cannot believe what I am doing.

I am writing another one-shot for this series.

Please don't hate me if I don't come back after this... ;A;

I am only entering a contest. Nothing more. And I also have NO idea what I am about to write. So. Uh. Maybe grit your teeth a bit and try not to scream at your computer if it gets too cheesy, ok?

Cythia belongs to TaiNotscha.

---

Up above your head, if you were in the living room like Cythia was that unfortunate day, you could hear a door slamming, hard enough to rock the house on its foundations and set your teeth on edge.

You could hear the WHUMP of a large stuffed animal hitting the just-closed door.

And then you could hear Kyouya running down the stairs with his head over his arms, screaming like an idiot.

Cythia guessed that the authoress upstairs was in a bad mood.

---

Kyouya set the small ball of energy down on the desk in the guest bedroom, locking the door behind him. He had always wondered what a muse looked like; now he would train it to be emo and evil just like Ryuga, and then maybe Mal would QUIT WRITING STORIES ABOUT HIM.

The muse took the shape of a ferret, squeaking and running across the room before taking sanctuary beneath the bed. Kyouya crouched down by the side of the bed and peeked underneath, to be met with the beady eyes of a...

Bowling ball.

A bowling ball.

He picked up the bowling ball; perhaps the muse would stay still long enough for him to make it EVIL.

Chile peppers. Chile peppers would most definitely make it evil.

---

Cythia looked up from her fort behind the couch, the fort she had created to protect herself from Mal, who could come raging down the stairs at any given moment. Kyouya was in the kitchen looking for chile peppers.

As she spied on him, she could have sworn that the bowling ball on the table turned into a dinner plate and sat quietly in its cold silence in front of a chair. But that was impossible. Her eyes were playing tricks on her.

Kyouya turned around, a bag of chile peppers clutched triumphantly in his hands, and did a double take.

"Cythia, did you see a bowling ball here a minute ago?"

"It turned into that dinner plate right there." Cythia pointed at aforementioned dinner plate, only to realise it was no longer there. Instead, a purple cat clung to the lamp high above them on the ceiling. Kyouya squealed and nearly dropped the dinner plate.

He reached up to retrieve the muse, and it hissed at him angrily before turning into a large bat and flying towards the window.

Cythia grabbed a kitchen towel and threw it over the bat, which fell to the windowsill.

"What kind of creature did Mal pull out of empty space this time?" she asked, giving him the towel-wrapped bat.

"That's her muse in there. I'm trying to turn it evil so she'll stop writing stories about me."

"She'll probably make a tragedy in which everyone dies and then the world is taken over by aliens", Cythia answered.

"As if making Tsubasa breakdance in the rain wasn't bad enough."

"What?"

"Nevermind." He set the muse down on the counter, opening up the towel to reveal a notebook. The muse had turned into a notebook.

"How am I supposed to feed it chile peppers if it's a notebook?"

"Just wait for it to turn back into an animal."

So they sat and waited and stared at the blank pages of the notebook until it turned into a tarantula, jumping up into Cythia's face before scuttling behind the fridge.

"I don't think it likes chile peppers."

"Just help me catch it, will you?"

All they found behind the fridge was a jar of honey.

"Okay, little muse", Cythia said. "You are really asking for it. Sit still and let us feed you the chile peppers." She tied a rope around it.

"There. Now it can't go anywhere."

The muse turned into a baby griffin and started chewing on the rope.

"WHOA! Easy, boy!" Kyouya pried its tiny jaws open and shoved the chile peppers down its throat. It breathed a column of fire out at him and its eyes went red.

"I think that did the trick."

"If this is what turns people evil, Ryuga needs to stop eating all those peppers."

Kyouya tugged on the rope and led the furious griffin up the stairs. He slammed the door quickly behind him, and once again Cythia could hear something thump against the other side.

"Another stuffed animal?"

"No. Actually that one was a chair."

They heard the fridge door slam and turned around. Ryuga looked up at them from behind the counter.

"Where's my chile peppers go? Now I can't be evil anymore."

"We fed them to Mal's muse so she'll stop writing stories about us."

Ryuga looked stunned.

"That has to be the worst idea you've ever had. And you've had some pretty bad ideas."

"What? No I haven't. Why?"

"I'm warning you, pretty boy..." Ryuga sank down behind the counter so only his eyes were showing, wide and afraid over the chipped pink tiles.

"Things are about to get worse..." He sank down out of sight.

---

"I can't believe you just did that, Kyouya."

"Why?"

"Listen to me." Tsubasa grabbed him by the collar of his shirt and tossed him in a chair. "Who knows what could happen!? The last time she was in a dark mood, she killed Donatello Hamato. She turned Yuu evil. And she GAVE RYUGA A SISTER. What I'm saying is, we may be safe now, but before you now it, Ryuga could have a nephew, Cythia will be part of a supernatural organisation, and you'll be having premonitions of the future!"

"I seriously doubt that."

"Whatever." Tsubasa threw his duffel bag over his shoulder.

"I'm going to join Ryuga in the bomb shelter."

"Not without me you're not!" Cythia hurried after him.

Kyouya was left alone in the room.

But not for long.

Mal descended through the ceiling in a whirlwind of darkness and terror, her griffin/muse floating beside her. Moments later a portal sucked every inhabitant of the house into darkness.

The next thing he knew, the Tokyo Tower was melting...

---

MAUHAHAHAHA. Did any of you *when it's in your hands* readers catch the true message of this story?

It's that you should never feed griffins chile peppers.



# Laundry

Let's see if some resources from our dear Internet can help me get this thing of the hiatus hang-up, hmm?

---

They were making him do the laundry.

THE LAUNDRY OF ALL THINGS!

Masamune hated doing the laundry.

Laundry was not friendly.

Laundry was wet.

Laundry was BORING.

IT WAS ENRAGING.

And it was all Tsubasa's fault.

It had happened one day when it was Tsubasa's turn to do the laundry; so MAYBE Masamune had sneaked up on him and maybe startled him a little on accident.

It was mainly on purpose, but it was an accident in Masamune's eyes; he MAY have decided NOT to scare Tsubasa, but the kitty had jumped out of his arms before he could. Tsubasa had screeched when the cat raked its claws down his back, and Masamune was sentenced to laundry duty for life since he had been so rude.

Masamune was sworn to revenge; Tsubasa, that evil menace! It was his own duty to BRING HIM DOWN. He had this responsibility to the entire household.

He spitefully jammed a clothes pin onto the line, so viciously that it broke in half, but he seemed not to notice. His plan to bring Tsubasa to justice was taking action. TODAY.

---

He found the victim of his justice slumped on the couch looking emo. He must've been subjected to Ryuga's medical treatment. He was pouting at the wall in front of

him.

Masamune dumped the bucket of cold water over his head unabashedly. Tsubasa screeched and jumped up.

"WHAT WAS THAT FOR!?"

"I'm doing the laundry, what did you think!? Oh, sorry, I must've spilled it! Are you OK, Tsubasa?" Masamune pretended to be genuinely surprised.

"Why do all you people have it in for me? I'm not the bad guy, Ryuga is!" Tsubasa wailed.

"Don't worry, Tsubasa, I heard that cold water makes your hair shiny!"

Tsubasa scowled down at the floor. "I don't want to live on this planet anymore."

The first step of Operation Pluck-The-Chicken was complete.

---

Now for the next step: Masamune stuck a video camera in the corner of Tsubasa's ceiling.

As the lights in the house turned off, he knelt on the floor in front of his laptop in his bedroom, picking up surveillance of Tsubasa's every move.

THERE it was. RIGHT THERE. COMPLETE PROOF.

Tsubasa opened a panel in his bedroom wall and pulled out A STUFFED ANIMAL! RIGHT THERE. THERE IT WAS.

Masamune saved the footage and clipped a picture from it, sneaked into the Big Computer room at night - the computer that was available for the entire household's use - and saved the photo on the desktop...

---

Step 3.

Masamune was in charge of the laundry, correct? Tsubasa had gotten what he deserved. Now it was time to get out of laundry duty once and for all.

Masamune put Tsubasa's vest in with the white clothes.

Mal's dad came storming into the kitchen the next morning in a blue bathrobe, glaring around at the kids seated around the table.

"Who did the laundry yesterday?" He said, trying to contain his rage.

"Masamune."

All fingers at the table pointed to him.

"Masamune Kadoya. EXPLAIN WHY ALL MY POLOS ARE MAGENTA!" He brandished the ruined shirt in Masamune's face.

"Uhh..." Faced with the remains of his crime, Masamune lost his composure.

"I think Yu put raspberries in the laundry soap!" he blurted.

"Who did the laundry yesterday?" Tsubasa came in holding a vest.

"Masamune."

"Point those things someplace else."

"Why did you bleach my vest?"

Tsubasa stood beside Mr. Hopeman, glaring at Masamune.

"I guess I'm just not qualified for laundry duty?"

"No, Masamune", Mal said with mock gentility. "It's okay. You can WEAR the ruined clothes, and BUY them some new ones, kay? We all forgive you."

WHY DID AUTHORESSES HAVE TO BE SO GOOD AT FLIPPING SITUATIONS!?

---

The next morning, he piled grass underneath the clothesline and set it on fire.

"MUAHAHAHA! BURN, BURN! BURNINNNNGGG...  
BUUUUUUUUUUUURRRRRRRRRRRNNNNNNINNNNNNGGGG..."

Ryuga heard the noise and came outside. "MASAMUNE! WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU DOING!?"

"I AM DOING THE LAUNDRY!"

"WHAT!? WITH FIRE!?"

"CLEAN IT WITH FIREEEE..."

"That's my jacket up there, you pyromaniac! Gimme that match!" Ryuga grabbed the smoking stick from him and stuck it down his shirt, then started smacking him with his smouldering jacket.

Ryuga was then sentenced to laundry duty along with Masamune.

---

Ryuga stood sweating beside him as they pinned up clothes in the heat.

"I betcha these are dry by the time we finish pinning them. Then it'll be time to hang them back up."

"I can fix that." Ryuga hosed down the laundry.

"Ta-da. Less work for us."

"Great idea."

They worked on in silence for awhile, then sat on the porch, drenched in sweat and hose water. Ryuga accidentally sprayed Masamune. A lot.

"You're all wet, Masamune."

"Well, it's YOUR fault."

"Let me help you." Ryuga grabbed Masamune and pinned him up on the line.

"OWW! HEY! RYUGA! HEEEEYY!" Masamune flailed around and clawed at the air.

"I'll come get you when you're dry."

Wow, Masamune thought. When Mal had got the Iron Strength clothespins...that

was definitely truth in advertising, right there.

---

Ryuga roughly ripped the clothespins off and Masamune fell onto the dirt.

"It's about time, man."

"You're all dirty again. Hand me the detergent."

"HEY! GET OFF ME!"

Ryuga and Masamune scuffled around and got wrapped up in the tablecloths.

"Any idea how we can get out of laundry duty?" Masamune gasped. "Because right now, I've had enough washing and drying to last me a lifetime."

"We write a letter of resignation. I know Kyouya has to do that all the time whenever he gets a job."

"Sounds good to me."

So Masamune went inside and got a sharpie and a piece of computer paper. Ryuga opened the marker.

"Whew. Why'd you have to get a permanent one?"

"Because we are resigning permanently."

"Good point." Ryuga started to write.

"To whom it may concern, get out of the room. There's no need to get everyone all worried.

"We, Ryuga Kishatu and Masamune Kadoya - "

"Wait a sec. Put my name first."

"No."

"But I was here first."

"Well, I can hurt you."

And so Masamune promptly shut his piehole.

"Hereby decided we were not going to do laundry any further. Why you ask? Well, have you ever tried to wash Masamune? He is very heavy."

Masamune reached over, grabbed the marker, and crossed that part out.

"Because laundry is not fun to do and it was also not my fault. Masamune set the laundry on fire."

"It's not my fault either."

"It wasn't his fault either. The cat took the match from him and struck it himself. Masamune, nobody is going to believe that."

"I meant that it wasn't my fault in the first place. The cat jumped out of my arms before I could decide not to scare Tsubasa."

Ryuga wrote it down dubiously.

"That's why we're not doing laundry anymore. And if you try to make me then there will be a whole lot more to worry about in your life, mister.

"Sincerely Ryuga and Masamune."

"Put my name first!"

"Oh look, a wild fist has appeared."

"Nevermind."

Masamune was then sent to present the letter to Mal's father. He took one look at it and handed it back to Masamune.

"No."

"But Ryuga said he's going to hurt people if he has to do any more laundry."

Mr. Hopeman got up close and personal now.

"Young man, I work for law enforcement. I think that I can safely refuse this resignation. I'm sure Ryuga would rather stay out of jail than be free from laundry duty."

"Yes, sir." Masamune meekly put the letter in the garbage can.

And so Masamune and Ryuga will be doing laundry probably until the day they die, which will probably be because -

GOOD GRAVY! SOMEBODY GET ME A FIRE EXTINGUISHER!

# I Found Mister Nice Guy (part 1)

Before you ask, I have no idea why I keep friendshipping Masamune and Ryuga.

---

Ryuga looked over the edge of the newspaper to find Masamune's lethal weapon haired head smiling back at him. As if heads could smile. It was his face, really.

"Hi, Ryuga!"

He sighed softly.

"Masamune, be quiet. I'm reading the newspaper."

"You don't usually read the newspaper."

"I'm just reading it so I can tell people to be quiet."

Masamune contemplated this for a moment and decided he couldn't really argue with Ryuga's logic.

"But it's the middle of the night. There's really no one to say 'be quiet' to."

"Well, you're here, aren't you?" Ryuga gazed at him with steely eyes over the top page, and then turned to the sports section.

"Okay, good point." Masamune crossed his legs on the cold tile floor and stared at the ceiling.

Ryuga eventually set down the newspaper.

"Why are you even up?"

"I couldn't sleep. Tsubasa gave me doughnuts earlier this evening and I haven't felt tired since."

Ryuga sighed wearily. "Yeah, well, I can't sleep either."

"Did you run out of chile peppers again?"



Ryuga smacked his hand down on the table. "It's Osias. I swear, that cat is the one taking them."

Osias mewed indignantly and stalked across the table. Ryuga pointed his finger in the cat's face.

"Listen, Osias, you may have tricked Nile into taking you home. But I can see through your cute little disguise."

Osias spat a spark at Ryuga.

"SEE! SEE MASAMUNE, YOU SEE THERE!? Normal cats cannot do that!"

Masamune nodded sagely and then shook his head at Osias, who sat beside the fridge waiting for someone to open it.

"And every time I get near that cat, he all but shoots fire at me. He just WON'T STAY OUT OF MY PEPPERS!"

"So what you're saying is..." Masamune stroked his chin. "You need to find a way to be evil again?"

Ryuga was about to protest when Evelin came in the kitchen.

"Evelin? What are you doing up?"

"I can't thleep, mithter." Evelin's lisp was not getting any better.

"Well you need to try. You have school tomorrow."

Evelin contemplated this for a moment.

"I'm thmart enough. I think I can afford to thkip thcool for one day."

"SCHOOL. It's SCHOOL, not THCOOL", Masamune said loudly.

"Shush-it. She can't help it."

"Yeah, that'th right, Mathamune. I can't help it."

Evelin picked up Osias and petted his fur reverently. "Ryuga, I don't think Othiath liketh you very much."

"You got that right, kid. Go back to bed."

"I want thome milk firtht or I won't be able to thleep."

"Well you're not warming it up. Last time we did that we got a nuclear bomb in the microwave."

Masamune bounced up eagerly. "I want to see that! Where was I when that happened?"

Ryuga shook his head at him. "Luckily, you were far far away."

He poured the milk for Evelin and handed it to her. Osias shared the cup with her and Ryuga watched him suspiciously, unsure whether or not to remove him from the counter.

"You need some help, man." Masamune shook his head at Ryuga. "Normally you'd be kicking that cat out by now! You're going totally OOC!"

"I have no idea what that means."

"I picked it up from Mal. It means you need to concentrate more on getting to know your characters."

Ryuga raised an eyebrow.

"Nevermind. Osias, get the scalpel..."

"Not on your life, Masamune."

"Not on your life, Mathamune."

"Evelin, don't do that. Listen, I'm fine. I just need Nile to get rid of that crazy cat. I'll ask him in the morning."

"ASK HIM!? And you're going to NOT WAKE HIM UP?"

"Masamune, be quiet." Ryuga flicked the newspaper at him.

"Listen to me. You go up there and you wake Nile up like the evil guy you are!" Masamune grabbed him by the headband and shook him back and forth.

"Be QUIET." Ryuga smacked him in the head with the paper.

"Do you want to be evil again or what!?" Evelin stood planted on his other side, her hands on her hips and her red curls swinging violently.

"I don't know." Ryuga lay down the abused newspaper. "It's quiet around here for once, and maybe it should stay that way; there's no flaming laundry or falling in pools right now. So no, I think I'm good."

Evelin stood open-mouthed for a minute. And then, "But you're thuppothed to be the Dragon Emperor! What are we gonna do without evil bedtime thtorieth?"

"Here, kid. You be the dragon emperor for awhile." Ryuga placed the headband on Evelin's head. "Now go back to bed."

Evelin smiled up at the crown on her head. "Okay."

"Wait a second, help me out here, kid!" Masamune glared at Evelin. "Don't go ditching me!"

"You heard what the guy thed. I get to be the Dragon Emperor if I go to bed. 'Night, Mathamune." Evelin left.

"B-b-but...She can't be an Emperor! She's a girl! She should be an EMPRESS! Hey, why don't I get to be the dragon emperor?"

"Because you can't be quiet."

"MAL! HELP ME OUT HERE, YOUR STORY'S GOING OOC!"

Mal came downstairs. "Masamune, BE QUIET." She hit him with a newspaper. "You should be in bed. Osias, get away from the fridge." She picked up Osias and went back upstairs.

Masamune fell down on the ground.

"How are we supposed to have a good story if we don't have a deuteragonist, Ryuga?"

Ryuga looked at him weird. "Are you all right?"

"No, I'm not all right. My evil buddy here is no longer evil. Now you're just a...a

buddy."

"I'm not your buddy, Masamune." Ryuga yawned and set down the newspaper.  
"I'm going to bed."

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"Hey, Ryuga. You want some lunch?" Masamune set a plate down in front of Ryuga cheerfully. "Eat up, pal."

Ryuga flicked the top piece of bread off of the sandwich. Underneath it lay a glistening red chile pepper.

"Seriously?"

Masamune groaned and flopped onto a chair. "You know, Evelin wore your tiara to school."

He was hoping Ryuga would, at the very least, insist that it was NOT a tiara. Instead:

"It's hers now. I don't really care."

"You need help."

"I do not need any help."

Masamune stood up and stomped his foot angrily. "That's it! I'M TELLING!" Taking a deep breath, he yelled to the sky:

"MAL! RYUGA WON'T BE EVIL!"

Mal came downstairs with a newspaper. "BE QUIET." She hit him with the newspaper.

Osias smiled up at Ryuga.

"Go away, please, Osias."

"SEE! YOU SEE THAT!? YOU SAID PLEASE! AND YOU NEVER SAY PLEASE!"

"I just did, chicken boy. Will you leave me alone now?"

Masamune glared at him. "I'm taking drastic measures now, Ryuga. You have been warned."

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"Hi, doctor man."

Ryuga looked down to see Kevin's blond head looking up at him. Once again, it was more of his face. Heads can't really look around on their own. Thus saith nature.

"Hi, Kevin."

"You're babysitting him for the day." Masamune placed Kevin firmly in Ryuga's lap. "And he's also staying over for the night. He is YOUR responsibility for the next 24 hours. And I can assure you, by the time you are done with him, you will be evil again."

Ryuga shrugged.

Masamune grabbed a video camera and set it on the counter. "I'm going to follow you and get proof."

"Why are you really doing this?"

"Because I CARE ABOUT EVIL!"

Ryuga glared at him.

"Okay, okay, fine. I need a mini documentary on child development for Social Studies."

"Mister doctor-guy, can I have a vitamin?"

"Aaaand...we're rolling, people." Masamune turned on the camera.

"I guess so, Kevin. Do you have any?"

"No. I only take Vitamin C. My mum says there's 26 vitamins but we haven't found them all yet, and if you eat them all it means you will live forever. That's why she's not old yet. She eats AAALLLL the vitamins in the WORLD."

"Okay." Ryuga handed him the newspaper. "Play with that. I'm going to go look up

that vitamin thing."

"COME BACK HERE MISTER! YOU ARE NOT DONE TAKING CARE OF THIS CHILD YET!"

Kevin smacked Masamune with the newspaper. "Be quiet." Then he walked after Ryuga.

"You know why the earth's so heavy mister doctor? It's because there's so much population stompin' around up there these days. That's what my mum says."

"Sounds legit to me." Ryuga handed Osias to the little boy. "Play with the cat. Don't let him burn you." He fished a library book out of a nearby box and started to read.

"Oh, REALLY? REALLY, MAN? You're reading PRIDE AND PREJUDICE!?" THAT IS SO LAME!" Masamune grabbed the book out of his hands. "YOU ONLY READ SCI-FI!"

Ryuga took the book back from his hands. "I don't want to set a bad example for Kevin."

Masamune sighed and sat down on the floor with the video camera. He was going to need help to make this guy evil again.

# I Found Mister Nice Guy (part 2)

Kevin clambered up on the couch beside Ryuga. "Ryuga, how do clouds get formed?"

Ryuga set down the book and looked at the little boy. "I have no idea. But they know how to do it and that's the important thing."

"You are a very wise man", Kevin said gravely. "Why do clouds just go around and around on top of the world?"

"Well I guess there's not much else for them to do." Ryuga picked up the book again.

Kevin had been asking Ryuga science questions for the past half hour, getting the most cryptic of answers.

What's humidity? It's when you look in the air and find water.

Why do we keep track of it? So we don't drown if we breathe it on accident.

What's a monsoon? A French gentleman.

It was all wrong.

And Ryuga did not seem in the least bit annoyed.

The dog got up on the couch and curled beside him. Though it had been a few months since the paint ordeal, Dumptruck seemed permanently blue.

Ryuga picked up the terrier and set her on the floor. "You're not allowed on the couch."

"Why is the dog not allowed on the couch?"

"I don't know. It's your aunt's rule, you'll have to ask her."

"You mean Aunt Jan?"

"Yes."

Dumptruck wagged her tail and jumped on Ryuga's lap. He then wrestled with her for a straight half hour more; Dumptruck refused to vacate the couch.

"Even DT can sense it, something's WRONG WITH YOU!" Masamune shrieked from behind the video camera.

"Stop it. BE QUIET." Kevin threw the newspaper at him.

"Kevin Hallmark and Ryuga Kishatu, you are DRIVING ME CRAZY."

"I'm not driving you! I'M NOT DRIVING YOU! You are not a car, and you don't have a steering wheel on your tummy. I'm not driving you, you are not a car, you are Masamoo-moo!"

Ryuga shrugged. "Can't argue with the kid's logic, Masamune."

"Masamune!" Kevin ran up and tugged on Masamune's jacket. "My cat ate a mouse one time, didja know that? He looks just like Osias!"

Figuring he could get some brownie points in his documentary for talking to the kid, Masamune pointed the camera down. "Oh really? And did the mouse taste good?"

"No, it was a computer mouse. He didn't like it. Ryuga, can I watch TV?"

Ryuga handed him the remote and Kevin forgot about TV, pretending the remote was a phone.

"Hello? Yeah, dis is Kevin. Hi Minny. Minny, the guy who looks like your dad is here. He's nice. He says clouds have nothing to do."

"Ryuga, will you get mad at the kid already so we can go?"

"Masamune, you should be more understanding of children. It wasn't too long ago that you were one of them", Ryuga admonished him.

"Kevin, don't play with the remote. You might break it. Wait, what is Kevin doing here?" Tsubasa gently removed the remote from the side of Kevin's face, where it'd stuck from being pressed so hard.

"Masamune kidnapped him so he could annoy me. It's not working."



Tsubasa raised an eyebrow. "Normally you'd be hiding in the bomb shelter by now."

"I'm a calm guy, Tsubasa. I don't know what you're talking about."

Tsubasa plucked the book from his hands. "Whatsis?" On reading the title of the book, he doubled over with laughter.

After he'd regained his composure:

"Okay, out with it, Masamune. What did you do to him?"

"He decided he didn't want to be evil anymore. It's not my fault. I'm trying to cure him."

"You're not doing a very good job."

"Gimme that, you clown." Ryuga grabbed the book from Tsubasa, grabbed Kevin, and retreated upstairs.

"Okay, somebody get him to a doctor."

"He is a doctor. If he can't cure himself, I don't know who can."

"Mal is up there...hopefully she'll handle things a little better than you did." Tsubasa and Masamune gazed up at the ceiling for some time. They didn't have to wait for very long.

"RYUGA! I'm trying to WORK! What's your deal, bringing Kevin up here? Are you CRAZY!? Go away, will you?"

A door was heard slamming, and a chastised Ryuga came down the stairs with Kevin once again. "Maybe she ate a chile pepper dis morning", Kevin said from behind him. "Dere was a samwich with a chile pepper in it on da table. I think she eated it. COUSIN MAL! DIDJA EAT THA PEPPER?"

Ryuga slapped a hand over Kevin's mouth. "Shush-it. If you bother your cousin right now, she'll be dancing on our graves by sunset."

"Probably in a conga line with Osias," Masamune muttered grimly.

"You're morbid."

Ryuga covered Kevin's ears quietly. "Are you done?"

Tsubasa stared at Ryuga. "Really, Masamune, get me the keys. We're going to the doctor."

30 minutes later found Ryuga and Kevin dragged into the back of Tsubasa's van, with Masamune and his video camera in the front seat. Tsubasa kept reminding him to turn around, but Masamune insisted that he was filming a documentary and could not be bothered with the law.

"I throwed a shoe at the doctor once", Kevin said gravely.

"Sure glad I'm not your doctor, kid."

"Me too." To which Ryuga said nothing and endured the rest of the ride in silence.

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"I'm sorry kids, but there's nothing wrong with your friend. I don't see what's the matter with him." The doctor stood at the door to the waiting room whilst Masamune filmed diligently away and Tsubasa tried to keep Kevin from climbing the fishtank.

Ryuga slipped out past the doctor's overweight frame and grabbed his book off the table. "How many times I have to tell you? I'M FINE."

"He is fine. Is that...are you reading..." The doctor started to laugh. Ryuga glared at him and trudged out the door.

"B-by the way", the doctor said, wiping mirthful tears from his eyes, "The bill will be 75 dollars."

"I only have euros", Masamune said.

"Why?"

"I have no idea."

Tsubasa wrote the guy a check; he hoped Mr. Hopeman wouldn't notice the deduction at the end of the month.

Then he hurried after Ryuga and Kevin.

# The case is solved

Masamune's plan was backfiring.

Rather than annoy Ryuga back to evildom, he was annoying Tsubasa, Masamune, and DT out of their minds.

"Kevin, you better quit it", Masamune snapped.

"YOU are not da boss! Barack Obama is da boss of dis place! So I just have to listen to HIM!"

"No, Kevin", Ryuga reminded him gently. "Tony Abbott is the boss right now."

"Ooooh, so I have to listen to HIM?"

"Yes. Barack Obama is the boss only in America, not in Australia."

"Okay. Lemme try dis again. YOU are not da boss! Tony Rabbit is da boss of dis place! So I just have to listen to HIM!"

"Much better." Tsubasa gently removed him from Masamune's video camera. "Get off there so Masamune can see through that."

"Tsubasa, your dog won't stay off da couch. She's a berry bad puppie."

"DT is not a bad puppy. She's a good dog. She just likes Ryuga a lot."

"Tsubasa, Ryuga sez your DOG is INSANE."

"No I didn't, Kevin. Come here and stop slandering me."

"Why am I floundering you, Ryuga?"

"Slandering. It means you're being mean."

"You need to go to time out", Masamune said gravely.

"I do NOT need a time-out! Only if Tony Rabbit says!...Ryuga, can I have a snack?" he then asked innocently.

Ryuga let him loose on the fridge.

"Dis tastes like how it tastes like", Kevin proclaimed seriously.

"Don't give him sugar, Ryuga."

Masamune paused the video to put a new battery in the camera.

Kevin found the birdcage and picked up a feather. "Look, I found a chicken leaf."

"Kevin, please will you sit still for a moment?"

"No, Ryuga, I only have to sit still if Tony Rabbit says."

"Guess what? I have him on the phone right now." He held out the remote to Kevin, and Kevin said, "Hello, Tony Rabbit."

After a short pause, he turned to Ryuga and said, "Tony Rabbit says YOU have to sit still."

"No, Kevin, he said YOU have to sit still."

"No YOU."

"YOU."

"Tony Rabbit is da boss and he sez you have to sit still, so YOU SIT STILL!" Kevin yelled at Ryuga.

"Guess what? I AM TONY ABBOTT!"

"IDENTITY THEFT!"

Ryuga brandished a newspaper. "Masamune, be quiet."

"Will you people quit doing that?"

"BE QUIET, Masamune." Tsubasa took control of the newspaper.

"Okay, it's not so threatening when you do it, TsuBAKA. You had to do it like DIS." Kevin grabbed the paper and waved it around like a madman.

"My name is not TsuBAKA, you little child."

"YOU are a little child."

"Why?"

"Tony Rabbit said it!"

"You sure like Tony Abbott, huh."

"I wanna be Tony Rabbit when I grow up."

"You can't do that."

"LET GO OF ME!"

"But Kevin, I'm 2 yards away from you. I'm not touching you."

Kevin kept on screaming. Ryuga grabbed him and placed him in the guest room, then sat back down on the couch with his book.

"Ryuga. Eat this." Tsubasa held out a chile pepper. But before Ryuga could even blink, Osias grabbed it from his hand and ran away.

Masamune raced after the cat.

Over a hill in the back of the house and around a few trees. Masamune followed the cat all the way to the bomb shelter and down into the cold dark under the earth.

At the bottom of the steps lay a pile of glistening red chile peppers.

Masamune gasped. So this was what Osias was doing with all those! Perhaps he wasn't really eating them, but stocking them up!

As he watched, the cat dug a small hole with his paws in the bottom of the bomb shelter. Then he buried one of the chile peppers in the small hole.

The earth in the bomb shelter stayed damp because of the humidity condensing on the walls, and was easy to move; peering into the dark, Masamune could see several small hills of earth where chile peppers were buried, and a few small leafy plants reaching towards the stairwell where the sunlight filtered in.

Osias looked up at him and mewed.

Masamune heard a chuckle behind him and turned to find Nile standing at the top of the steps.

"I had no idea that my cat was a vegetarian. I wonder who taught him to do that."

Masamune and Nile grabbed armfuls of the stolen peppers and carried them back to the house, Osias meowing behind them all the way.

So the crisper in the fridge was restocked with chile peppers, and Masamune could've sworn that a few weeks later, he saw Osias at a booth in the farmer's market, selling chile peppers grown in the bomb shelter. But he didn't say anything.